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Canada pg 9

Prisoner beaten, general admits



Celebrity Buzz

Cage's ex launches fraud suit

pg 38



Plan to honour Tiger dropped

POLITICS A California congressman says he won't continue his push to honour Tiger Woods with a Congressional Gold Medal.

Democratic Rep. Joe Baca introduced legislation in March that called for the golfer to be recognized for promoting good sportsmanship and breaking down barriers in the sport.

Baca says that "in light of the recent developments surrounding Tiger Woods and his family," he won't pursue legislation to give him the award.

The medal is the highest award Congress has to honour civilians for achievements and contributions to society.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Torch relay

Visiting an old flame



PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Short-track speedskater Jean-Francois Monette lights the Olympic flame at Montreal's Olympic Stadium yesterday.

Common set to go country

MUSIC The Halifax Common will be rockin' again next summer.

Metro Halifax has learned Power Promotional Events Inc. is set to announce a two-day country concert extravaganza on Aug. 6 and 7 featuring Alan Jackson.

The concert will include other well-known country acts, although no other details were available.

When contacted by Metro yesterday, Michelle MacKay of the Dartmouth-based promotional group wouldn't confirm anything until an official announcement is made. That announcement should come at a 11:30 a.m. press conference today at the World Trade and Convention Centre.



Alan Jackson

This concert will be the latest big-ticket show to hit the Common site in the last few years.

In July, both Sir Paul McCartney and Kiss played to crowds of more than 50,000 people.

In 2008, country music star Keith Urban played before about 30,000 fans, and in 2006, over 40,000 people came out in a steady rain to see The Rolling Stones.

PHILIP CROUCHER/ METRO HALIFAX

Dexter fires back

Premier defends his party's plan for a single, centralized jail

PAUL MCLEOD
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Premier Darrell Dexter is striking back at his critics over a new provincial jail.

The NDP has come under fire for cancelling Tory plans for a jail in Springhill in favour of a larger, central jail.

"As far as I was concerned, it was a political announcement that was made, and we have to stop doing this," Dexter said yesterday of the Tory announcement made days before their government fell.

"We have to stop making decisions that are simply costing the government more money that we don't have."

"It's time that we put aside the narrow political interests of whose riding something goes into and looked at the public interest." Premier Darrell Dexter

When the NDP changed tack, Tory Cumberland South MP Murray Scott was livid and accused Dexter of breaking his promise to honour Tory commitments. Yesterday Dexter shot back.

He said it "shows how bankrupt the kind of economic thinking of the former government was" that their plan to boost the local economy was to build a jail rather than looking at the strengths of the region.

The justice department estimates a single, central jail will save $5 million in construction costs and $1.7 million each year operationally. Dexter said he wants a jail that saves public money and best serves correctional needs.

"It's time that we put aside the narrow political interests of whose riding something goes into and looked at the public interest," he said.

But some still see the move as a betrayal. This week Cumberland South NDP riding president Don Tabor resigned from the party over the issue.

Scott also continued to lobby yesterday, calling for an economic impact study before a final decision is made. He's also asked the premier to go to Springhill to defend the decision to residents.

News on the Move

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Business pg 18



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Local



May holding climate-change rally

Federal Green party Leader Elizabeth May, left, is holding a climate-change rally tonight in Halifax prior to her departure for the UN climate change summit in Copenhagen. The event is taking place at 7:30 p.m. at the Airport Hotel during her layover at Halifax Stanfield International Airport. May is also asking anyone attending the rally to bring letters about what they want out of Copenhagen, and she will hand deliver them to Prime Minister Stephen Harper. METRO HALIFAX

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News in brief

ARRESTS Four men and one woman are facing charges after a drug search Tuesday night in Fairview. Police say a search of a residence on Dawn Street resulted in the seizure of a quantity of marijuana, cocaine, hash, drug paraphernalia and a loaded handgun. Stephen Andrew Coleman, 21 (Dartmouth), Shea Alexander Durnford, 21 (Halifax), Ryan William Ross, 20 (Dartmouth), Ashley Rose MacNeil, 23 (Halifax), and Eric Thomas Whickens, 53 (Halifax), are facing a number of drug- and weapons-related charges.

CRASH Three people were taken to hospital in Halifax early yesterday morning with non-life-threatening injuries after a three-vehicle accident near the Bayers Lake Industrial Park. The crash occurred just before 6 a.m. on Highway 102 inbound near the exit to Highway 103. Staff Sgt. Brenda Zima could not comment on what may have caused the accident. METRO HALIFAX

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Blogs Global Peasant's heirloom recipe for orange spice molasses cookies
Video Peter MacKay steps up government defence in Afghan detainee controversy after top commander does about-face at **metronews.ca/canada**



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PHILIP CROUCHER/METRO VANCOUVER

Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter delivers the state of the province address yesterday to a full room at the Marriott Harbourfront Hotel in Halifax.

Dexter won't take committee pay

PAUL MCLEOD
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FUNDS Premier Darrell Dexter said yesterday he will refuse to take money for chairing a committee that never meets.

Every year the premier of Nova Scotia makes $2,060 for chairing the internal affairs committee. The last time it met was the fall of 1994.

Dexter said yesterday he wasn't even aware of the issue until the story made media rounds last week, but he won't accept money for nothing.

"I wouldn't take money for work that I didn't do," he told reporters yesterday after the annual state of the province address in Halifax.

"I have to say I wasn't aware the committee had never met, even though I was apparently on it for a number of years."
Premier Darrell Dexter

Dexter said the issue flew under the radar even when he was opposition leader.

"I have to say I wasn't aware the committee had never met, even though I was apparently on it for a number of years," he conceded.

Fittingly, dealing with the issue of dormant committees would have to go through one of those very committees. The assembly matters committee, for which the chair is paid $3,090 annually, deals with such issues. It hasn't met in four-and-a-half years.

Dexter said he is going to look at the committees and decide whether they should be brought back or dropped altogether.

"I think they should meet. If there are committees there and they have a legitimate role, then the question is why haven't they been meeting?" he said.

On the other hand: "If there is no role for it then we should wrap it up."

N.S., N.L. mull alternative electricity routes

ENERGY Concerns over access to the lucrative and energy-hungry markets south of the border have led Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador to consider alternative ways of shipping electricity that would bypass New Brunswick, Premier Darrell Dexter said yesterday.

The two provinces are worried the proposed sale of NB Power to Hydro-Quebec could prevent them from shipping electricity from a potential hydro project in Labrador and tidal power from the Bay of Fundy through New Brunswick.

"If there becomes a problem at the New Brunswick border, you have to look at the alternatives. You're not going to rule out anything."
Premier Darrell Dexter

"That's why the question of transmission is so important," said Dexter following a speech to the Halifax Chamber of Commerce.

"If there becomes a problem at the New Brunswick border, you have to look at the alternatives. You're not going to rule out anything."

One of those options could include the construction of at least 200 kilometres of underwater cables that would cross the Strait of Belle Isle, Cabot Strait and Bay of Fundy to New England, in addition to transmission lines on land. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bawdy house charge laid

Police raid nets female suspect

MONIQUE MUISE
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A 27-year-old Halifax woman has been charged with operating a bawdy house after police raided a home in Clayton Park Tuesday.

Halifax Regional Police spokesman Const. Brian Palmeter said the HRP/RCMP Integrated Vice Unit conducted a search of a residence on Red Fern Terrace around 6 p.m. and arrested a man and a woman inside.

Palmeter would not reveal what officers found within the home, but said police had accumulated enough evidence over the course of a two-month investigation to support the laying of the charge.

"A lot of different things were done as part of the investigation," he said. "Obviously, sufficient grounds had to be obtained in order for the (search) warrant to be issued."

"These types of houses can have an impact on the community, so we take (residents') complaints very seriously."
Const. Brian Palmeter

Police had received several complaints from residents of the surrounding neighbourhood, who suspected the home was being used for prostitution, Palmeter added.

"These types of houses can have an impact on the community, so we take those complaints very seriously," he said.

No charges were laid against the man. The woman has been released and is scheduled to appear in Halifax provincial court Jan. 28.

Four face charges after drug bust

CRIME Several police units managed to work in tandem to snag four people engaged in a drug transaction Tuesday.

According to a release issued yesterday afternoon by Halifax Regional Police, a community response officer and officers assigned to the Quick Response Unit apprehended the suspects near Spring Garden Road and seized quantities of marijuana and cocaine. The HRP/RCMP Integrated Drug Unit later conducted two searches at the homes of three of the accused.

Three men, aged 21, 31 and 46, are facing drug-trafficking charges. A woman, 20, has also been charged with drug possession. All four are from Halifax. METRO HALIFAX

Spring Garden Area's Quick Facts
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Regan wants park beefed up

Halifax West MP Geoff Regan is urging HRM to include more land in a protected wilderness area. Regan says land between Bayers Lake and Hammonds Plains would make a logical addition to the Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes wilderness park. He says municipal council deserves credit for committing to the regional park. THE CANADIAN PRESS

H1N1 on the decline

But vaccination still important, province says

ALY THOMSON
for Metro Halifax

The number of H1N1 cases in Nova Scotia is declining steadily, but that doesn't mean there is nothing to fear, said the province's chief public health officer Dr. Robert Strang.

As of Dec. 4, the province has distributed enough vaccine to immunize more than 50 per cent of the population in Nova Scotia — or almost 500,000 people.

"That's good, but we can do better, and we need to do better," Dr. Strang told local media at a press conference in Halifax yesterday. "The more people who are immunized, the less likely we are to see impact from H1N1 either now or in the coming months."

Dr. Strang discussed a possible third wave of H1N1, and said the best preventative measure is to get vaccinated.

"If we have enough people immunized we could actually minimize or totally prevent that third wave," he said, indicating H1N1 could strike again in winter or spring.



Health Nova Scotia reported five hospitalized H1N1 cases between Nov. 29 and Dec. 5, down from 50 in the previous week.

The percentage of emergency room visits with influenza-like symptoms has decreased to eight per cent, down two per cent from the previous week, and the number of lab-confirmed cases dropped from 19 to 12.

> **"If we have enough people immunized we could ... prevent that third wave."**
> Dr. Robert Strang

Dr. Strang stressed there is still a need to get vaccinated, especially heading into the holiday season.

"As we enter the holiday season, where more and more people are celebrating, there's more social occasions ... there's more potential for people to spread viruses," he said.

Public heath immunization clinics will continue this week and next. Dr. Strang said the need for mass clinics will be reassessed for the new year, and vaccine will still be available through family doctors.

Dr. Strang said there is little to no seasonal flu activity in the province.

Christmas **The gift of a tree**



ALY THOMSON/FOR METRO HALIFAX

Nova Scotia Lt.-Gov Mayann Francis accepts a tree from Kevin Veinotte of the Lunenburg County Christmas Tree Producers Association yesterday afternoon at Province House. Francis is donating the tree to the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre. Premier Darrell Dexter and Natural Resources Minister John MacDonell are also donating trees from the association.

Tire recycling decision called into question

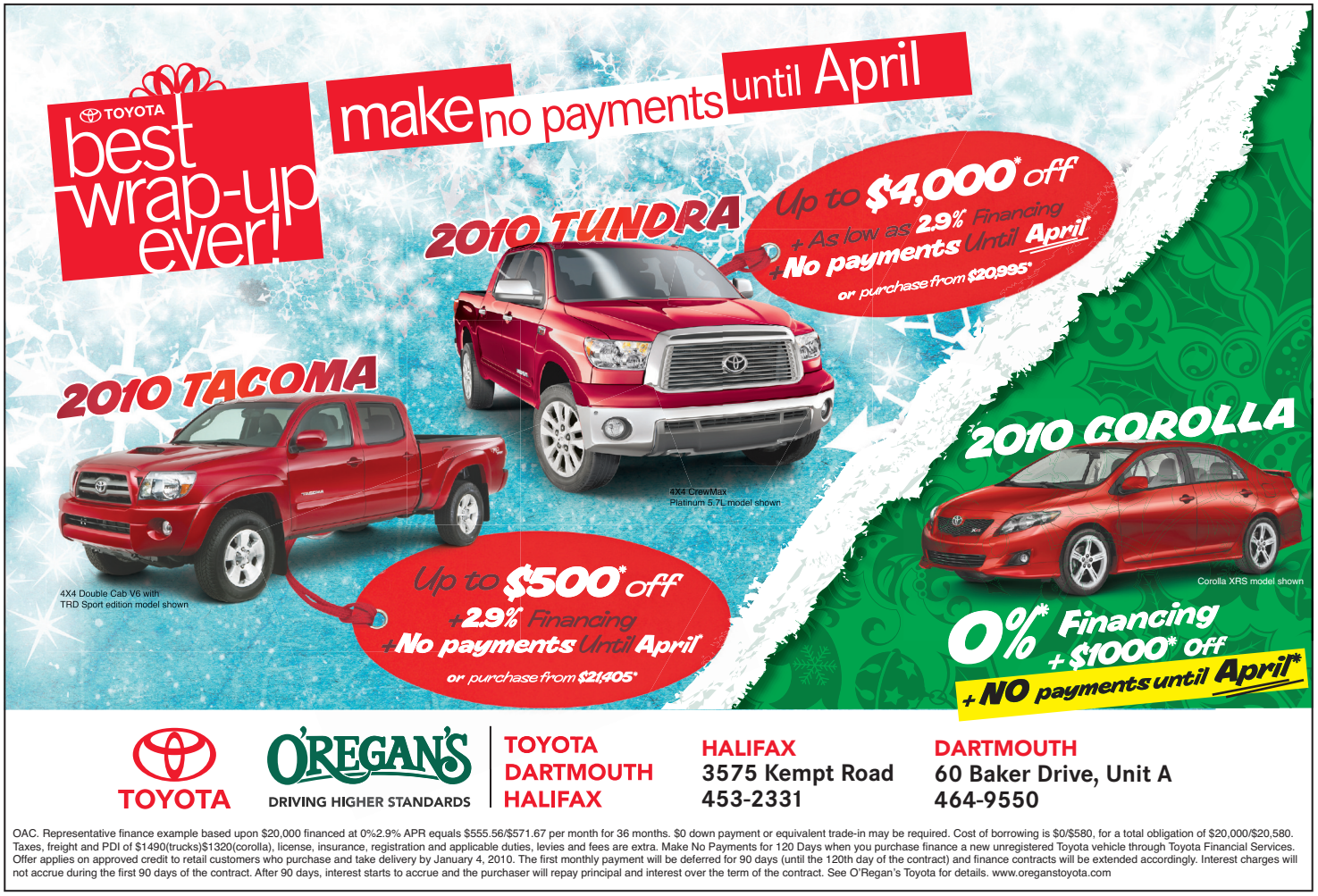
CONTRACT Some Nova Scotia municipal leaders are questioning the decision of the Resource Recovery Fund Board over the awarding of a tire recycling contract.

The contract was awarded to Halifax C & D Recycling Ltd. for $1.95 a tire.

The municipal councillors from Antigonish and Guysborough say they wonder why the tender didn't go to the Guysborough District Municipality.

It was on the shortlist and had a bid that was 65 cents a tire lower at $1.30.

Committee member and Antigonish Coun. Jack MacPherson says the Guysborough District Municipality's second generation landfill would have been an ideal facility to do the work. THE CANADIAN PRESS



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Flamenco guitarist Jesse Cook adds second show

A second show has been added for internationally renowned nuevo flamenco guitarist Jesse Cook, who is coming to Halifax on Monday, April 12. A 9:30 p.m. show has been added to go along with the previously announced 7 p.m. concert. Tickets for the new show go on sale today at noon. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Truro OKs proposed raises for council

POLITICS Truro's municipal politicians are getting raises and a mechanism for future increases has been put in place.

Town council has voted unanimously to approve a report and recommendations from Halifax firm Integrated People Solutions.

It calls for each position to receive an increase after comparing Truro with five towns (Amherst, New Glasgow, Bridgewater, Kentville and Wolfville) with similar responsibilities to ensure a fair and equitable compensation system.

$30,980
The mayor of Truro's revised salary.

$20,121
The deputy mayor's revised salary.

While Truro is the largest town in Nova Scotia it did not have the highest paid politicians and two of the three roles were the lowest paid among their counterparts of the other towns.

The mayor will now make $30,980.78, the deputy mayor $20,121.69 and the five councillors $17,883.51.

TRURO DAILY NEWS



Red Cross bracing for more disasters

Atlantic branch recruiting 150 more people

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The Atlantic Canadian branch of the Red Cross is making some major changes in an effort to deal with the increasing number of severe disasters striking the region.

The Red Cross currently manages a team of 850 core volunteers in the four Atlantic Provinces, but a steady stream of hurricanes, fires, floods and pandemics is prompting the organization to add an additional 150 people to the ranks.

"We've been on call for storms much more over the last few years," said Bill Lawlor, director of disaster management for the Red Cross in Atlantic Canada.

"We work very closely with scientists who are climate change experts, who are telling us that we need to be on guard, particularly in Atlantic Canada… with the exposure to hurricane activity."

Lawlor said the organization is also planning to recruit 3,000 reserve volunteers by 2015, who could contribute in the event of a major disaster.

"Those reserve volunteers will be stationed in higher-risk areas, like in high-density areas or along the coastal regions," he explained. "We would have management in place from our core volunteers, and then we have people providing other services in a non-managerial way from the reservist group."

Once you take into account initial training, mock disaster exercises and regular meetings, Lawlor said every core volunteer costs the organization about $1,100 per year — meaning that adding an extra 150 people will cost the Red Cross $165,000.

"We have some very strong corporate partnerships," Lawlor said when asked where the additional funding would come from. "We work closely with them to say, 'Here's where we're going, and if you'd like to be a part of it, this is what we're looking at for expenses.'"

In 2009, the Red Cross responded to 79 residential fires and 12 non-fire events in the province. During the Spryfield area fire last spring, volunteers evacuated 1,100 people and provided emergency shelter for 20.


DARRELL OAKE/FOR METRO HALIFAX

A firefighter looks on as flames burn a home during last spring's wildfire in Spryfield.

"We've been on call for storms much more over the last few years."
Bill Lawlor, Red Cross

Deficit no surprise: Chamber of Commerce

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The president of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce says the bleak financial forecast for the city delivered at Tuesday's regular city council meeting shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone — least of all, HRM's mayor and 23 city councillors.

In a release issued yesterday, Valerie Payn said the Chamber had warned the Halifax Regional Municipality that it would face a tough fiscal year in 2010-11, and that the they should begin depositing any savings into a separate account.

"Obviously, the deposits into that rainy day fund were few and far between," Payn said in the release.

HRM's bean counters are currently projecting a $30 million deficit for next year — mostly stemming from declining property tax revenues and increases in solid waste and wage expenses. Staff recommended several options to close the gap, including possible tax and fee hikes for residents.

But Payn prefers the municipality avoid those routes at all costs.

"The Chamber … feels another run at tax reform and a tough review of the services that the city is providing will help the city tackle its future financial hurdles," she said.

"Obviously, the deposits into that rainy day fund were few and far between."
Valerie Payn

18 CUPE units give unions strike mandate

CUPE hospital workers in Pictou, Yarmouth and Annapolis have given their union a strike mandate. That brings the total to 18 groups of CUPE hospital workers across the province outside the Capital District holding strike votes. Any strike action wouldn't take place until after Jan. 11. NEW GLASGOW NEWS

Shellfish quality dropping: Report

A new report on Nova Scotia's coastline says the quantity of shellfish that was caught off the province dropped by more than a half between 2003 and 2006.

The government report titled the State of Nova Scotia's Coast says the province will suffer physically, ecologically and economically without the coordinated participation of those with a stake in the future of the coastline.

It also says storms, which have always affected Nova Scotia's coast, will become worse and more economically devastating as sea levels rise and the effects of global warming are felt.

The province says the report released yesterday is the first of its kind in Atlantic Canada and involved 15 departments and agencies.

Sea levels

- In Halifax, relative water level readings show a sea level increase of 30 centimetres per century, which the report says is mostly caused by land subsidence. The trend is expected to continue. The report says global warming will result in a sea level rise of 70 to 140 cm over the next century. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Released by the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, the report gives an overview of the condition of Nova Scotia's coastal areas and outlines a framework that it says will "focus efforts to tackle complex coastal issues."

It defines six priority areas including coastal development, public access to coastal areas, the rise of sea levels, water quality and the future of sensitive ecosystems and habitats.

The report says restrictions placed on shellfish harvesting areas is an indicator of poor water quality, and it found that between 1985 and 2000 the number of closures in harvesting areas doubled. In 2000, there were 278 shellfish closures along 3,314 kilometres of coastline, covering 939 square kilometres.

"This trend seems to have continued, and has resulted in a drop in the quantity of harvested shellfish over recent years," the report says.

The report says that in 2003, the shellfish catch stood at 317,556 tonnes, which dropped to 127,969 tonnes in 2006.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

High-speed won't be online by Jan. 1: Official

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SERVICE Vanessa Lentz was looking forward to not having a 50-kilometre round trip just to get a decent Internet connection. Now that day is much farther off.

Lentz is one of the estimated 60,000 plus people who have no high-speed Internet access in Nova Scotia. As of Jan. 1, 100 per cent of the province was supposed to have high-speed access.

Government officials admitted yesterday the project is behind schedule and likely over-budget.

Currently seven per cent of the province is still limited to dial-up and the end date has been pushed to May. Despite this, the telecommuncation companies responsible for the delay may not face any penalties.

"It's absurd," said Lentz, who has to drive from her Hillsvale home to a Windsor library where she picks up wireless Internet to run her photography business Farm Gate Imaging.

"When I just want to simply download my email if there's a large file attachment it could take a half hour or hour."

Deputy Economic and Rural Development Minister Ian Thompson told a legislature committee yesterday the companies Eastlink and Seaside High-Speed were behind schedule.

The government could level fines of up to $2 million, but he said that was only one possible tool to help get the job done quickly.

In an evasive interview with reporters after the meeting Thompson tried to withdraw the $2 million figure, saying it was inaccurate. However, department numbers released later in the day revealed penalties can range up to exactly $2 million.

"It's absurd. When I just want to simply download my email if there's a large file attachment it could take a half hour or hour."
Vanessa Lentz

When asked if the government would actually leverage the penalties, Thompson said, "that's conceivable."

When asked if the project was running over budget he said, "it's conceivable."

When asked how much more it could cost taxpayers he said, "I guess it could be thousands, it could be millions."

The joint federal/provincial project was originally supposed to cost $34 million, with the province footing $20 million.

Progressive Conservative MLA Chuck Porter said he fields five calls a week from angry residents on the issue. Porter said the telecom companies signed a contract and should be fined for not meeting the terms.

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No surprise here

A federal announcement is planned for Truro Sunday. The announcement is expected to be the $855,000 from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency's RinC program the town will put towards last summer's renovation of the Colchester Legion Stadium and future improvements. **TRURO DAILY NEWS**

Council looking to shut down Truro cruising spot

Truro town council wants to eliminate a favourite hookup spot for gay men at one of its most popular attractions.

Mayor Bill Mills said the top of Wood Street has a long "reputation" that many in the community know about, but few speak of.

"It's a favourite pickup spot for guys from all over the Maritime provinces," he explained.

He said it has been on the Internet with men exchanging emails to set up times to meet atop Young Street at one of the entrances to Victoria Park.

"They go up and have a rendezvous and then they go into the woods and do their thing," he said. "It's been known for years."

On Monday, the town introduced a street closure policy for Wood Street to be voted on Jan. 4 before taking affect. If approved, the policy will mean a gate, located on Wood Street, will be moved to the south side of the Wood Street Centre.

The idea is to make the area in question less accessible for vehicles. Signs indicating the area is under surveillance by town police and "indecent behaviour will not be tolerated" were posted about a year-and-a-half ago but have not "curtailed" the activity, the mayor said.

"It's embarrassing for some people and some people, I guess, are pretty angry about it because the individuals up there are pretty bold," he said about other people who use the park.

TRURO DAILY NEWS

Inclusive issue?

- Truro made national headlines in 2007 when council decided not to fly the gay pride flag. This week's decision is totally different, proclaims Truro Mayor Bill Mills.

"If it was heterosexual parking up there, obviously, it would become an issue as well," Mills said.



SUBMITTED/TRURO DAILY NEWS

Indecent behaviour signs are posted atop Wood Street at the entrance to Victoria Park. The town has introduced a street closure policy to try to eliminate the area as a hookup spot for gay men.

Delays shouldn't affect tar ponds project: Agency

CLEAN UP Construction of a pumping system designed to move water around the tar ponds site is behind schedule, but it won't affect the overall project, said Sydney Tar Ponds agency spokesperson Tanya Collier MacDonald.

The $37.6-million flow diversion contract was awarded to a joint venture between MB2 Construction of Membertou and Beaver Marine Ltd. of Halifax. The contractor is installing pumps and pipes to divert water from two brooks and to drain the ponds to enable another contractor — Nordly's Environmental, a Cape Breton company owned by J&T van Zutphen Construction Inc. of Southwest Mabou, and ECC of Marlborough, Mass. — to solidify the sludge in the tar ponds.

The work is now expected to be complete by Dec. 18. **CAPE BRETON POST**





Injured hockey player seeking worker's compensation
A Canadian hockey player hurt while playing for a minor league team in Rhode Island is suing for worker's compensation in Michigan. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada



FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chief of the Defence Staff Walter Natynczyk holds a news conference at National Defence headquarters in Ottawa yesterday.

Top general says prisoner beaten

Afghan bombshell puts pressure on Tories

The country's top military commander reversed himself yesterday and put rising pressure on the government with the explosive assertion that a beaten and bloodied Canadian-captured prisoner was indeed abused by Afghan authorities prior to 2007.

The about-face by Gen. Walt Natynczyk — who had earlier insisted Canadians had not detained the suspected Taliban in June 2006 — undercuts one of the Conservative government's key lines of defence in the widening controversy over the handling of insurgent prisoners.

Defence Minister Peter MacKay has categorically insisted "there is not a single, proven allegation" of abuse prior to 2007.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper brushed aside the revelation by saying it "confirms what we have been saying all along."

But, in a recalibration of the government's position, Harper told the House of Commons that the military acted when they uncovered "substantive evidence" of abuse. Previously, Harper and MacKay have said there was no such evidence.

Natynczyk's revelation also raises questions about whether Canada violated international law by continuing to transfer prisoners to Afghan custody after it had evidence of abuse.

The general skirted questions about any potential political fallout and said he's ordered a board of inquiry investigation into why neither he, nor his predecessor, Rick Hillier, saw a platoon commander's report which detailed the prisoner's capture.

University of Ottawa law professor Errol Mendes says the report represents "incontrovertible proof" that Canada should have stopped transfers right away and that continuing the practice means Ottawa has violated international law.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

DOG A dog continued to fight even after it had been shot after its jaws latched onto a police officer's leg. "The bullet hit the dog in the spine ... but it continued to growl and snarl after it let go," Ontario Provincial Police Const. Peter Bertin said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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New ambassador to U.S. Doer headed to Copenhagen talks

CLIMATE Canada's man in Washington is going to Copenhagen.

The Harper government will dispatch Ambassador Gary Doer to climate talks in the Danish capital, The Canadian Press has learned.

Sources confirm Canada's newly minted ambassador to the United States will be part of a 16-member group of "eminent expert advisers." The group is also made up of heads of industry, including the CEOs of Calgary-based companies Atco Ltd. and TransAlta Corp.

Some members of the group apparently met recently in Calgary for a pre-Copenhagen briefing with Environment Minister Jim Prentice.

Prentice's office declined to provide more details on Doer's tabbing for the climate talks, or on the advisory group. A spokesman would only say an announcement on the Copenhagen advisers is expected this weekend.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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the Bay

Liberals look to restore rural mail service

Federal Liberals are pushing for the restoration of rural mail service cut by the Harper government. Mark Eyking, chair of the Liberal rural caucus, is introducing a private member's bill that would create a rural Canadian postal charter. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mother relieved after suspect charged

Slain New Brunswick teenager's cousin facing first-degree murder rap

The mother of a 16-year-old girl whose death and disappearance gripped residents of a small northern New Brunswick community says she feels a small measure of justice after the victim's cousin was charged with murder.

RCMP charged Curtis Bonnell with first-degree murder after a massive investigation into the death of his cousin, Hilary Bonnell.

"It's a little bit of justice for my little girl," Hilary's mother, Pamela Fillier, said yesterday. "(But) it's not over. It's far from over."

The body of Hilary Bonnell of Esgenoopetitj First Nation, also known as Burnt Church, was found last month buried in a remote wooded area that's part of a former military training area.

She had been missing since Sept. 5 after attending a house party the night before on the reserve of 1,100, setting off an extensive search.



Hilary Bonnell

Her last confirmed sighting was recorded on surveillance footage at a convenience store in the community.

RCMP Insp. Roch Fortin said the investigation, which involved more than 200 officers, was arduous from the beginning.

"The investigation has been complex and we have had RCMP members literally working around the clock since we first received the call that Hilary was missing," Fortin told a news conference in nearby Tracadie-Sheila.

He alleged that Curtis Bonnell acted alone, adding that the location where the girl's body was found was very remote and that no one in the community should feel they failed by not finding her sooner.

Bonnell has not had an opportunity to enter a plea and the murder charge against him has not been proven in court.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Calgary **Grandi goes green**



JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Former Olympian Thomas Grandi, an alpine skier, delivers a letter from 20 Olympic athletes to Prime Minister Stephen Harper's constituency office in Calgary, yesterday asking that he protect winter sports by supporting a binding agreement at the UN climate summit in Copenhagen.

Ontario, B.C. HST gets approval from Commons

TAX The HST appears to be a done deal for Ontario — and a big step closer to reality for British Columbia.

The House of Commons voted 253-37 yesterday in favour of a 13 per cent harmonized sales tax in Ontario, 12 per cent in B.C.

The Conservatives, Liberals and Bloc Québécois supported the controversial measure, while the NDP opposed it.

Just hours earlier, the Ontario legislature passed its own legislation and B.C. is expected to follow suit early in the new year.

The Senate will now deal with the federal HST bill, which combines the GST with provincial sales tax and transfers money to the two provinces for making the change.

Several MPs were absent for the vote, including Conservative Dona Cadman and Liberal Keith Martin who both represent ridings in B.C where the tax is unpopular.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

LINDHOUT A spokeswoman for a freelance journalist who was held captive in Somalia for 15 months says she has returned to Canada. Sarah Geddes says Amanda Lindhout and her family are back safely in Alberta.

PLANE CRASH An investigation into a plane crash in Alberta that killed five people concludes a similar crash could happen again. The Transportation Safety Board found that the single-engine Piper aircraft was overloaded, the pilot lacked refresher training and the aircraft's gyroscope failed due to lack of maintenance.

CAMPING The B.C. Court of Appeal has upheld a lower court ruling that struck down a city of Victoria bylaw that banned camping in city parks by the homeless. A judge ruled last fall that it is unconstitutional to restrict camping in its parks if all shelter beds in the city are full. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Bombing can't break dog-owner bond

The owner of a dog that miraculously survived a massive bombing in Baghdad returned to his collapsed home yesterday to be reunited with his pet, stunning neighbours who thought he was dead. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World



Captured Aussie was focusing on plight

An Australian photojournalist released after being held hostage for 15 months in Somalia said yesterday he was trying to highlight the plight of those less fortunate when he was kidnapped. Nigel Brennan , left, and Canadian journalist Amanda Lindhout were kidnapped by gunmen on Aug. 23, 2008. They were released Nov. 25 after a reported $700,000 US ransom was paid, some of it by Australian entrepreneur Dick Smith. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Trying to bridge gap

Satisfying both rich, poor nations not easy, says U.S. envoy

The United States for the first time outlined a dual path yesterday toward cutting greenhouse gases that would involve both the Obama administration and Congress.

Speaking at the United Nations climate conference in Copenhagen, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson described the EPA's decision that greenhouse gases should be regulated as complementary to U.S. legislation — not an effort to supplant the work of Congress.

"This is not an either/or moment. This is a both/and moment," she told more than 100 people who packed a U.S. meeting room in the conference centre.

Negotiators at the 192-country conference are also working to bridge the chasm between rich and poor countries over how to share the burden of fighting climate change.

Getting an agreement that satisfies both rich and poor nations would not be easy, said Todd Stern, the top U.S. climate envoy. "But I think an agreement is there to be had if we do this right," he added.

Go Green

"Ten billion will not buy developing countries' citizens enough coffins."
Lumumba Di-Aping

Lumumba Di-Aping of Sudan, the head of the 135-member bloc of developing countries, said the $10 billion a year that has been proposed to help poor nations fight climate change paled in comparison to the more than $1 trillion already spent to rescue financial institutions.

"If this is the greatest risk that humanity faces, then how do you explain $10 billion?" he said. "Ten billion will not buy developing countries' citizens enough coffins." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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England **Muzzled voices**



LEFTERIS PITARAKIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A choir of activists perform a concert highlighting the lack of education opportunities for girls in the developing world, in London yesterday. Only male members of the band were allowed to sing, while girls fell silent with gags across their mouths.

News in brief

WEB Facebook has rolled out promised changes to beef up privacy controls, allowing users to decide exactly who sees status updates, pictures and other content. The changes follow updates to Facebook's privacy policy, which were partly based on recommendations by Canada's privacy commissioner Jennifer Stoddart. THE CANADIAN PRESS

PENNSYLVANIA A woman who drank herself unconscious celebrating her 20th birthday says a hospital didn't properly treat her, resulting in partial amputations of both legs. Shanna Hiles has filed a malpractice suit against Uniontown Hospital. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Club fire death toll hits 125

Members of a regional government in Russia overseeing a town hit by a deadly nightclub blaze resigned yesterday as the death toll from the fire rose to 125. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gatorade dumps Tiger

Pulls Woods' drink, says decision made before recent issues

Gatorade is discontinuing its Tiger Woods drink but says it made the decision before the golfer's car accident led to a media firestorm surrounding his personal life.

The decision to drop the drink, called Tiger Focus, was first reported by trade publication Beverage Digest in an issue dated Nov. 25, two days before the incident at Woods' home in Florida.

The publication's editor, John Sicher, said he learned of the decision the week of Nov. 9. The brand — a unit of PepsiCo Inc. — says the decision does not have to do with recent events.

The drink debuted in March 2008. Beverage Digest estimates it represents less than five per cent of Gatorade's volume.

Sales volume of Tiger Focus was down 34 per cent this year through October.

Meanwhile, Woods has vanished from prime-time TV advertising since the scandal. Data from Nielsen Co. shows there have been no advertisements in prime-time featuring Woods since Nov. 29.

The research firm said the last prime-time ad to appear featuring the golfer was a 30-second ad that day for the Gillette Co. That commercial aired eight times during November, spokesman Aaron Lewis said.

There have been no other commercials since then on all broadcast networks and 19 cable networks during the evening news, prime-time, late-night and during weekend sports, he said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Helmand **Football night in Afghanistan**



KEVAN FRAYER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

United States marines react while playing a game of mud football yesterday following a rain storm at their base in Khan Neshin, in the volatile Helmand province of southern Afghanistan.

News in brief

INDIA Indian children are increasingly caught in the middle of fighting between the government and communist rebels in impoverished rural areas, with at least 42 schools attacked in the past year, a human rights group said yesterday.

NEW JERSEY Bruce Springsteen posted a statement on his website urging support of the gay marriage bill that's up for a vote in New Jersey's Senate today. Springsteen wrote he's "always spoken out for the rights of same-sex couples."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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China rolls out affordable housing policies

China issued policies to curb property speculation after home prices rose at the fastest pace in more than a year and Premier Wen Jiabao pledged support for affordable housing. The government will impose a sales tax on homes sold within five years of their purchase, increasing the time period from two years. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Oslo activists prepare for Obama

Although he doesn't show up at the Copenhagen climate talks until next week, U.S. President Barack Obama won't be far from climate issues when he lands in Oslo today to collect his contentious Nobel Peace Prize.

Greenpeace activists said they had laid out the message "Obama: Our climate, your decision" in enormous cloth letters covering an area 500 feet by 170 feet in a field next to Oslo's Gardermoen airport.

"This is our message and we want to send it most importantly to the president himself," Greenpeace spokeswoman Bente Myhre Haast said, adding that she hopes it will be visible from Obama's flight path.

On the sidewalks near Oslo's lavish Grand Hotel, where Obama will stay, activists sprayed similar slogans on the pavement — from "You won it, now earn it" to "Change the politics, save the climate."

The Norwegian committee that awards the prize said it chose Obama for bringing the U.S. into the fight against global warming and for supporting multilateral diplomacy.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Disputed prize

- Greenpeace and other environmental groups dispute the award, saying Obama hasn't done enough to combat climate change.

Iran claims UN nuclear station a spying post

WEAPONS Iran claimed yesterday that a newly built UN station to detect nuclear explosions was set up near its border so that world powers could spy on the country, an accusation that underscored the growing bitterness in Tehran's relations with the West.

Construction was completed last week on the seismic monitoring station in neighbouring Turkmenistan, a few miles from the Iranian border. It is one of roughly 275 such facilities operating around the world to detect seismic activity set off by blasts from nuclear tests — such as ones in recent years by North Korea.

Iran protested the facility even though it asserts it is not trying to produce nuclear arms. Tehran has been resisting heavy pressure in recent months to sign on to a UN-backed plan aimed at thwarting any attempt to build atomic weapons.

Abolfazl Zohrehvand, an adviser to Iranian nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili, said the international treaty that allows for setting up such observatories is an "espionage treaty."

The UN commission that seeks to ban all nuclear tests said the decision to build the station was made more than a decade ago with Iran's involvement.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

MURDER TRIAL A registered sex offender charged with killing 11 women and hiding their remains in and around his Cleveland home has agreed to let police fence off the house with barbed wire to preserve evidence. Fifty-year-old Anthony Sowell appeared in court yesterday with a new legal team that will defend him on aggravated murder charges. If convicted, he could face the death penalty. The prosecution has not ruled out a possible visit by a trial jury to the home.

TIGER ATTACK German police say three tigers attacked a Hamburg zookeeper, who remains in the hospital in critical condition. Hamburg police said yesterday that the 28-year-old animal handler at the private Hagenbeck Zoo tripped during a performance involving five tigers Tuesday night. Three of the tigers attacked him as he lay on the ground. The wounds are considered life-threatening. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Comment

The persistence of porn

Relating



I feel I owe an apology to Simon Louis Lajeunesse on behalf of my (and his) gender.

The Université de Montréal researcher, studying the effects of pornography on its male viewers, looked for a control group of guys who had never been exposed to it.

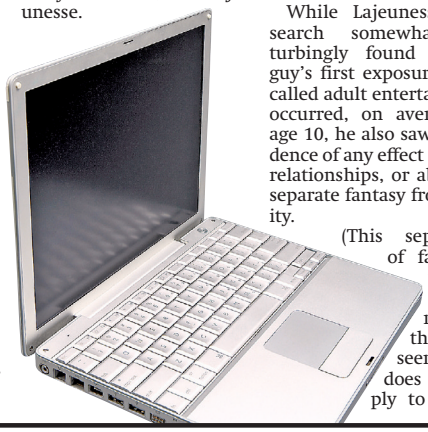
He could find none.

"Guys who do not watch pornography do not exist," he told the Montreal Gazette.

It's encouraging that Lajeunesse found no evidence of ill effects often ascribed to pornography by its critics, because whatever dirty movies do to us, they seem to be doing it to pretty much every man and no small number of women.

The study's subjects said they watched an average of 40 minutes a week. I hasten to mention that your particular boyfriend/husband/whatever is telling you the truth if he never sullies his eyes with such filth. Neither do I. Swear.

But your virtuous fella and I are obviously just about the only ones — complete statistical freaks. The rest of dudedom stands guilty as charged. Sorry about that, Prof. Lajeunesse.



We cannot deny your findings, and we are not proud. Despite its enduring popularity, it's not as if the essential quality of X-rated cinema has improved vastly since 1975, when Erica Jong famously declared, "My reaction to porn films is as follows: After the first 10 minutes, I want to go home and screw. After the first 20 minutes, I never want to screw again as long as I live."

While Lajeunesse's research somewhat disturbingly found that a guy's first exposure to so-called adult entertainment occurred, on average, at age 10, he also saw no evidence of any effect on their relationships, or ability to separate fantasy from reality.

(This separation of fact and fiction, like so many things, seemingly does not apply to embattled golfer Tiger Woods, whose growing roster of "transgressions" allegedly includes porn star Joslyn James, a.k.a. Veronica Siwik-Daniels.)

According to Lajeunesse's data, 90 per cent of the porn consumed by his interviewees came from — and this too may shock you — the Internet. A very smart woman of my intimate acquaintance expresses wonder that men get anything done all day with all that porn just sitting there at the other end of every keyboard.

This modern smut delivery system has its drawbacks, as a friend of mine discovered when he tried to explain to his wife why their computer had been laid low by viruses. He received emergency technical assistance from a computer-savvy buddy, and a little advice about safer surfing, but repairing things on the home front remained his problem.

Steve Collins offers his best guesses on relationships for Metro every two weeks.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Views

Gun control law more than a symbol

SpeakingOut



This past weekend, groups across the country commemorated the 20th anniversary of the Montreal massacre. Families of the victims mourned their loss and recommitted to defending Canada's gun control law, which they called a monument to the memory of the victims.

Twenty years ago, a man walked into l'École Polytechnique, separated the men from the women and screaming, "You are all a bunch of feminists," killed 14 young women and injured 13 others. His semi-automatic rifle — the Ruger Mini 14 — will soon be easier to get, thanks to Stephen Harper and other federal politicians.

On Nov. 4, the House of Commons passed private member's Bill C-391, a bill that will eliminate the need to register rifles and shotguns. Nervous opposition politicians spooked by a well-financed American-style campaign targeting specific MPs backed the Conservatives over the objections of virtually every public safety organization in the country.

In spite of the focus on handguns and urban violence, rifles and shotguns are a substantial proportion of the guns recovered in crime in this country. They are the guns most often used to kill police officers and the guns most often used in domestic violence and in suicides, particularly involving youth.

Registration ensures licensed gun owners are held accountable for their firearms. If gun owners are licensed but guns not registered, there is no way to prevent legal gun owners from selling or giving guns to unlicensed and potentially dangerous people.

Opponents of gun control complain about the cost. But seven million guns have been registered. The money has been spent. The only guns that need to be registered going forward are new guns or those being traded. The costs — $3 million a year — pale in comparison to the costs of gun injury and death. And police consult the system thousands of times each day in order to take preventative action.

The law is much more than a symbol. Three hundred fewer people die from gunshots now compared to 1995, when the law passed. Our problem is not just the vocal and well-financed gun lobby. We can only hope that those who wore white ribbons to mark the memory of the women who died Dec. 6, 1989, will now take action.

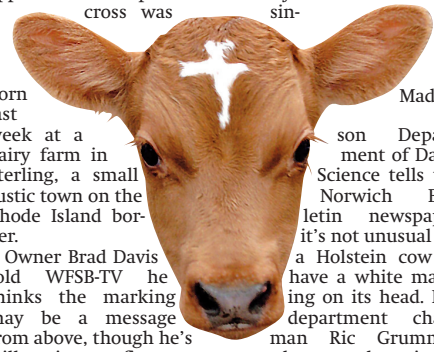
Wendy Cukier is the president of the Coalition for Gun Control.

Worth mentioning

Does divine bovine have a message from above?

A holy cow in Connecticut, perhaps? Or maybe a divine bovine?

A calf with a white marking on its forehead in the approximate shape of a cross was born last week at a dairy farm in Sterling, a small rustic town on the Rhode Island border.



Owner Brad Davis told WFSB-TV he thinks the marking may be a message from above, though he's still trying to figure out what that message might be.

The mostly brown calf is half Jersey, half Holstein. Neighbourhood children have named it Moses.

The chairman of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Dairy Science tells the Norwich Bulletin newspaper it's not unusual for a Holstein cow to have a white marking on its head. But department chairman Ric Grummer says the cross shape is unusual.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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AOL could be in trouble for years: Analysts

AOL Inc. may report declining profit for years after its spinoff from Time Warner Inc. today, said analysts at Barclays Capital Inc. and RBC Capital Markets. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Business

EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Shoppers play chicken

The annual game of chicken has begun in earnest as consumers wait to see how long retailers can hold out before slashing prices even further as the Christmas deadline looms.

With just 15 days left to shop, half of Canadians are only halfway through their holiday lists, a survey by Maritz Research Canada shows.

That's a higher number of people who are delaying their purchases than last year, said Rob Daniel, managing director.

And unless you have your heart set on a limited edition item, it will be worth the wait, other industry experts said.

"There's going to be a little game of chicken with the consumer," said Willy Kruh, national partner with KPMG.

"Consumers already saw prices being discounted early in the game, more than normal. So they're going to wait."

Shoppers are planning to spend $570 on gifts on average, the same amount as last year, and they're again favouring stores that advertise low prices, the survey found.

Walmart Canada is the top holiday shopping destination for the third year in a row with 65 per cent of consumers indicating they plan to shop there, followed by Zellers and Canadian Tire, who tied at 43 per cent each, the survey found.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



TONY BOCK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE PHOTO

Walmart is the top holiday shopping destination for Canadians, followed by Zellers and Canadian Tire, a survey found.

Honda Civic tops stolen vehicle list

AUTO Two models of the Honda Civic have landed on an annual top 10 list of most frequently stolen vehicles.

The two-door, sport injection racing model from 2000 tops the list released yesterday by the Insurance Bureau of Canada, while the 1999 model comes in third. But the bureau says the appearance of high-end models like the Cadillac Escalade on the list reflects increasing involvement of organized crime in auto theft.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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DIOR
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EnCana may buy back up to 37.5 million shares

EnCana Corp. said yesterday it had received approval to buy back and cancel up to 37.5 million of its common shares. The buyback would cost about $1.1 billion based on Tuesday's closing price of $29.26 on the Toronto Stock Exchange. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Business in brief

TABLET Apple Inc. is preparing to launch a tablet personal computer in late March or April, with manufacturer partners poised to roll out as many as one million units per month, according to an Oppenheimer research note. The highly anticipated tablet is expected to pitch Apple into the digital book market popularized by Amazon.com's Kindle e-reader. Oppenheimer analyst Yair Reiner said the new tablet could boost Apple's earnings per share by 25 cents.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Games in theatres

Cineplex to broadcast 2010 events live in HD

The 2010 Winter Olympics are headed to the movies.

The media consortium in charge of broadcast coverage says the Vancouver Games will be beamed live in HD at 64 Cineplex Entertainment theatres across central and western Canada.

It says Cineplex, which runs theatres from Quebec through British Columbia, will dedicate one auditorium a day to broadcast CTV and RDS feeds throughout the Games.

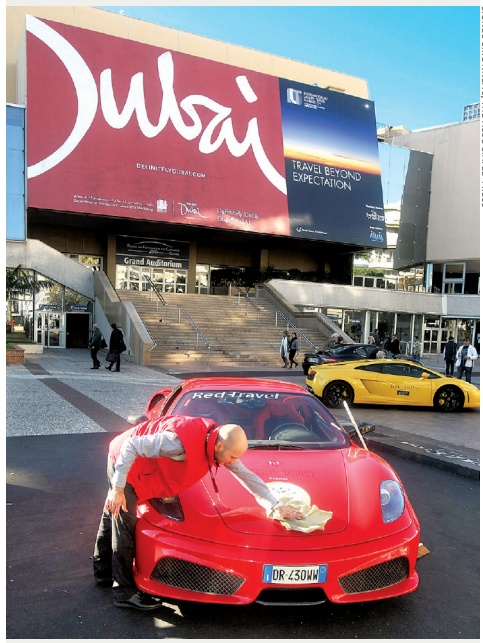
It would cost fans $9.95 for individual, one-day tickets, or $29.95 for unlimited access to broadcasts throughout 17 days of the Olympics.

So-called "theatre passports" go on sale Dec. 18 at participating theatres while individual one-day tickets will be available Jan. 15.

While a first for the Winter Games, theatre broadcasts have proven to be a boost for other marquee events including performances by the New York Metropolitan Opera and National Hockey League games.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Exhibition Luxury travel



LIONEL CHIRONNEAU/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A man polishes a Ferrari at the International Luxury Travel Market exhibition (ILTM) yesterday in front of the Cannes Festival palace, in Cannes, southeastern France. The ILTM is the leading annual business-to-business event for the global luxury travel community, bringing together over 3,600 suppliers and personally invited professional luxury travel buyers.

Dubai debt woes weigh down market for 3rd day

STOCKS Dubai's main stock exchange plunged for a third straight day yesterday as investors dumped holdings in the troubled Arab boomtown amid a scramble for details about the depth of its debt woes.

The Dubai Financial Market's benchmark index dropped 6.3 per cent at the close, building on steep declines since Monday. The bourse in Abu Dhabi — the oil-rich emirate home to the United Arab Emirates' federal government — tumbled 2.8 per cent.

The declines reflected a lack of information about the scope of Dubai's debt pile and how it plans to repay it.

Concerns over the government's increasingly clear unwillingness to assume responsibility for the debts of companies that it owns — best illustrated by officials' lack of backing for troubled conglomerate Dubai World — are also weighing on the market, analysts say.

"It's all about the absence of any news, clarity and confirmation of what will happen."
Julian Bruce, EFG Hermes

"It's all about the absence of any news, clarity and confirmation of what will happen," said Julian Bruce, director of institutional equity sales at EFG Hermes.

Those concerns have prompted a series of ratings downgrades, the most recent coming Tuesday when Moody's Investor's Service cut the ratings of six government-linked companies, leaving all in junk status.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Britain taxes bankers' bonuses

LONDON The British government slapped a one-time tax of 50 per cent on fat bank bonuses yesterday as it tried to win over recession-weary voters ahead of a looming general election.

But Treasury chief Alistair Darling's plan to exact payback for the crisis that led Britain into its worst recession since World War II faced opposition criticism that it was at best political spin and would do little to raise revenue — and, at worst, potentially damage London's standing as a financial centre. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Four Patriots miss practice

Wide receiver Randy Moss and three linebackers were not at the New England Patriots practice yesterday. Coach Bill Belichick declined to comment on their absence. According to the Providence Journal's website, Moss and linebackers Adalius Thomas, Gary Guyton and Derrick Burgess showed up late to an 8 a.m. team meeting and were sent home. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports



Owens signs modelling deal

The catwalk might never be the same now that Terrell Owens, left, has signed a deal with a modelling agency. Having already launched a reality TV show and promoted his own breakfast cereal, the Buffalo Bills receiver is ready to try fashion after signing a deal with Wilhelmina Models this week. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Olympic hopes fade

Losses leave former favourite Jones unlikely to make cut

Jennifer Jones' Olympic dreams might well be over.

Jones, the defending national women's champion, came to the Olympic curling trials in Edmonton as a heavy favourite to represent Canada at the 2010 Winter Games.

From program guides handed out to Rexall Place visitors, to television trailers surrounding the arena, Jones' likeness has been splashed everywhere, with her win at the trials seemingly a foregone conclusion for many.

But for the third time in five round-robin matches, Jones was on the losing end yesterday, dropping a 6-4 decision to Saskatoon's Stefanie Lawton.

Jones' 2-3 record puts her in a tie for fifth place heading into yesterday's evening draw. Three teams are tied for second place.

Speaking with reporters after the loss, the Winnipeg curler said yesterday morning's result was a true disappointment.

"I think we'll need some help but stranger things have happened," she said, leaving open the slim possibility the stars will align in such a manner that her rink makes the playoffs.

Eight women's teams began play in the tournament, dubbed the Tim Hortons Roar of the Rings Curling Trials, presented by Monsanto, on Sunday.



NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Skip Jennifer Jones looks on yesterday while playing against Team Lawton during the Canadian Olympic curling trials in Edmonton. Lawton defeated Jones 6-4.

Howard still unbeaten

• A draw to the four foot in an extra end kept Glenn Howard's perfect record intact at the Canadian Olympic curling trials yesterday. Edmonton's Kevin Koe scored two points in the 10th end to tie the game but Howard, from Coldwater, Ont., made it look easy in the 11th for a 7-6 win.

The first-place team at the end of the round robin will advance directly to the final match, while the second- and third-place teams will meet in the semifinal.

The tournament champion will represent Canada at the 2010 Olympics.

Making matters even worse for Jones is the fact that her final two round-robin matches will be against Calgary's Cheryl Bernard, who has yet to lose at the curling trials, and Shannon Kleibrink, who won the bronze medal at the 2006 Winter Games.

"At the end of the day we'll have no regrets," Jones said.

"Hopefully it turns our way and if it doesn't it was just not meant to be."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Montreal could join MLS next year: Impact owner

A Major League Soccer franchise could be granted to Montreal early next year, Montreal Impact owner Joey Saputo said yesterday.

"It's clear for us, and now more than ever, that the arrival of MLS in Montreal is only a question of time," Saputo said in a release. "We are hoping to have news in the first quarter of 2010."

Saputo met with MLS commissioner Don Garber and league president Mark Abbott on Tuesday night. The three men then had a meeting yesterday with Quebec Finance Minister Raymond Bachand and Montreal Mayor Gerald Tremblay.

"We've stated many times that Montreal would be a great market for MLS and we look forward to continuing our discussions," Garber said in a release.

"We continued our discussions with the Saputo family about a future MLS expansion team in Montreal and had very productive meetings with Minister Bachand about securing funding for the expansion of Saputo Stadium."

Toronto FC joined MLS in 2007 and the club often draws more than 20,000 fans to BMO Field. The team has more than 16,000 season ticket holders.

The Vancouver Whitecaps are scheduled to join the league in 2011.

Major League Soccer plans to expand to Philadelphia next season, giving the league 16 teams. The league will reach 18 teams in 2011 when Portland, Ore., joins with Vancouver. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Magazine's cover comes at awkward time

It's like missing a three-foot putt on the 72nd hole with a one-shot lead.

The timing couldn't be worse.

Golf Digest, the premier magazine about the game, features a photo illustration of Tiger Woods and U.S. President Barack Obama on the cover of the January issue.

The magazine, which began landing in subscribers' mailboxes earlier this week, was printed in mid-November, well before the world's best player crashed his Cadillac Escalade outside his Florida mansion, touching off a sex scandal involving a long list of alleged infidelities.

"We're a monthly magazine with monthly deadlines," spokesperson Bret Hopman responded in an email yesterday. "The January issue went to press almost two weeks before Tiger's accident."



While it's certainly a case of bad timing for Golf Digest, the same might also be said for the PGA Tour.

Already reeling from the impact of an economic slump that was particularly tough on the auto industry, which had thrown its money behind a host of tournaments, the pro tour can ill afford to have its most marketable player falling out of favour with fans and sponsors. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Sports in brief

NFL Canadian Oshiomogho Atogwe, the second-leading tackler for the St. Louis Rams, will not play again this season. The Rams said the safety from Windsor was placed on injured reserve with a shoulder injury sustained in Sunday's loss at Chicago.

NHL The NHL has suspended Phoenix Coyotes defenceman Ed Jovanovski two games for a forearm to the head of Minnesota Wild centre Andrew Ebbett. The league announced the discipline yesterday.

GOLF The PGA Tour has picked up its third new title sponsor of the year with an announcement that Waste Management will be sponsor of the Phoenix Open starting next year. METRO NEWS SERVICES



Three-way trade completed

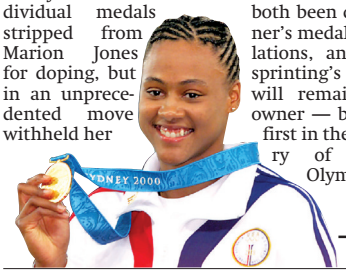
The New York Yankees, Detroit Tigers and Arizona Diamondbacks have completed their trade that puts all-star centre-fielder Curtis Granderson in pinstripes. The deal became official yesterday, a day after the teams reached a tentative agreement. The clubs wanted to check medical records before finalizing it. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

And the 100-metre gold medal goes to ... Nobody

OLYMPICS It's time to rewrite the Olympic record books — there was no gold-medal winner in the women's 100 metres at the 2000 Sydney Games.

The International Olympic Committee yesterday reallocated two individual medals stripped from Marion Jones for doping, but in an unprecedented move withheld her 100-metre prize from Greek sprinter Katerina Thanou because of her "disgraceful" behaviour in evading drug tests at the 2004 Athens Olympics.

The decision means the first two runners across the line in Sydney have both been denied the winner's medal for doping violations, and the gold in sprinting's marquee event will remain without an owner — believed to be a first in the 113-year history of the modern Olympics.



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Marion Jones

Olympiakos advances

Barcelona, Inter Milan, Stuttgart and Olympiakos advanced in the Champions League yesterday to complete the lineup for the next round.

Defending champion Barcelona needed an 86th-minute free kick by Lionel Messi to win 2-1 at Dynamo Kiev and edge Inter for first place in Group F.

Inter beat Russia's Rubin Kazan 2-0 to advance, while Stuttgart took second place in Group G with a 3-1 win over Unirea Urziceni.

Olympiakos beat already qualified Arsenal 1-0 to finish second to the Gunners in Group H.



RICHARD HEATHCOTE/GETTY IMAGES

Olympiakos players celebrate victory yesterday at the final whistle during the UEFA Champions League Group H match against Arsenal in Athens, Greece. Olympiakos beat Arsenal 1-0.

Barcelona needed only to avoid a large defeat to advance and that looked possible when Artem Milevskiy scored an early goal for Dynamo, but Xavi Hernandez equalized in the 33rd after sustained pressure and European player of the year Messi made sure Barcelona qualified in first place ahead of Inter with his curling free kick.

Samuel Eto'o and Mario Balotelli scored on either side of halftime to give Inter Milan a 2-0 win over Rubin Kazan.

Inter finished second in Group F with nine points, two behind Barcelona, leaving Rubin Kazan to drop into the Europa League as the third-place finisher.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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12 YEARS EXPERIENCE

Pettitte staves off retirement, signs one-year deal with Yanks

BASEBALL Andy Pettitte asked himself all the important questions: Was he ready to prepare for another long year? Could he top last season? Was his family on board?

And then he decided — rather quickly, too — he indeed wanted to pitch again for the New York Yankees.



Andy Pettitte

"I didn't want to regret not playing," he said.

Pettitte and the World Series champions agreed yesterday on a $11.75-million US, one-year contract.

The deal represents a raise for the 37-year-old left-hander, who made $10.5 million last season and helped the Yankees win their 27th World Series title.

"I wanted to get this decision made," he said on a conference call.

"It's nice to get it wrapped up."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports in brief

FIBA The road to the 2012 London Olympics for the men's national basketball team could go through Canada. Canada Basketball is one of five countries bidding for the 2011 FIBA Americas tournament, the qualifier for the London Games. Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and Puerto Rico are also in the bidding.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Show your pride
This Striped Stocking Hat for kids features Miga embroidered on the front, a pom pom and a woven patch with the Vancouver 2010 emblem. For more details or to order online, go to elevatesport.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES



HOLIDAY

Shopping Guide

SPECIAL FEATURES EDITOR: STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

A Blu-Ray Christmas

From players to what to watch, Metro has you covered

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada



The Panasonic DMP-BD60 Blu-Ray player, below left, and the Panasonic SC-BTX70 Blu-Ray Cinema home theatre, right.

Nothing completes the perfect holiday break like sitting inside your warm living room with the family and watching your favourite movies and videos.

As the snow (hopefully!) falls during your Christmas break, here are a few options to help you get the most out of your viewing experience:

Toshiba BDX2000 Blu-Ray player
$249

Toshiba's first Blu-Ray disc player is a clean, uncluttered design that provides full 1080p Blu-Ray playback, upconversion for regular DVDs so you don't need to dump your large DVD library, and Blu-Ray specific goodies like BonusView (which lets you run things like director's commentaries in a picture-in-picture box while you watch) and BD-Live, which lets you use an Internet connection to download short features and trailers or play online games. Best of all, the price is solid.



Panasonic DMP-BD60 Blu-Ray player
$299

Another solid player at a good price point, Panasonic's value entry into the Blu-Ray player market does all the requisite 1080p/upconversion/BonusView and BD-Live stuff, but it also adds Viera Link and Viera Cast, which allow linking to PVR-type devices for recording your programs and streaming Internet goodies like YouTube directly to your TV. The player also has built-in reduced power-consumption features like auto power stand-by and is Energy Star qualified.

LG BD390C Blu-Ray player
$429.99

A bit pricier but well worth the cost if you like streaming stuff like YouTube movies onto your TV without needing your computer, LG's upper-scale Blu-Ray player is a very popular system that kicks a lot of butt. Of course it has 1080p Blu-Ray playback and upconverting for DVDs, high-definition video and sound with Dolby TrueHD and Dolby Digital, but it also features an external playback connection for external hard drives, 1 gigabyte of internal memory for recording onto BD-Live without needing an external memory card, and quick-booting and loading in under 20 seconds. The player's integrated Wi-Fi capabilities let you connect your TV to an Internet connection for easy streaming of online video and pictures as well.



Panasonic SC-BTX70 Blu-Ray Cinema home theatre
$1,299.99

If you want to go whole hog and really upgrade your entire home theatre setup, you would be hard-pressed to find a more complete player-plus-sound-system option for the price than Panasonic's SC-BTX70 Blu-Ray kit. With 375 watts of audio output, built-in Dolby TrueHD and Digital Plus high-clarity sound, whisper mode surround sound and a Dolby Virtual Speaker, this thing really kills on the sound side. It also has 1080p playback for Blu-Ray with ultra-upconverting for DVDs in the form of PHD, which processes each pixel individually, giving it all the necessary video power to make your TV a real centrepiece of your entertainment plans. Best of all, the system includes a universal iPod dock and SD card slot, making it even easier to watch what those digital movies you're already carrying around with you. Big sound and powerful visuals from a surprisingly compact package; if you've got the cash to spare, you won't be disappointed.

What to watch

Duplicity
$46.99 on Blu-Ray

Featuring stellar performances from Clive Owen and Julia Roberts, Duplicity is a fun, flirty spy flick that may not be the greatest Oscar contender of the year, but is still a great view. Take bets mid-movie on who's playing who and let the winner drink all the leftover eggnog.

Public Enemies
$41.99 on Blu-Ray

Another strong Johnny Depp vehicle, the film is a surprisingly poignant Depression-era gangster romp that has great action and captures the look and feel of the 1930s well. If you love Johnny — and who doesn't? — give it a go.

Battlestar Galactica Complete Series
$172.50 on DVD, $379.99 on Blu-Ray

An amazing show that garnered mainstream and true sci-fi viewers alike, Battlestar Galactica is a keeper and this ultimate 25-disc box set is the mother of all boxed sets. Presented in Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround Sound and presented in its own snazzy display box, the set is a whole load of sci-fi awesomeness.



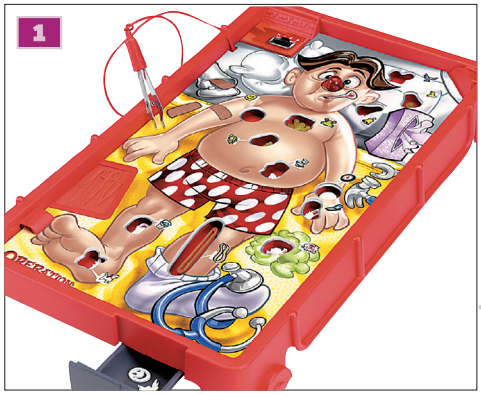




Stocking stuffer
Keep them warm with these children's pom-pom slippers, $6, by Joe Fresh Style. For more, go to joe.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide

Fun and games















1 **Operation**, $19.99, at all major retailers, including Walmart, Toys R Us and Zellers. For more, go to hasbro.com.

2 **Easy-Bake Oven & Snack Centre**, $34.99, and **Easy-Bake Decorating Sensation Frosting Pen**, $19.99; hasbro.com.

3 **Beatles Trivial Pursuit**, $39.95 at Indigo and Chapters stores. For more, go to chapters.indigo.ca.

4 **CLUE: Secrets & Spies edition**, $29.99, features optional text messaging. For more, go to hasbro.com.

5 **Tamagotchi disco lights**, $16.99. Available at Walmart, Toys R Us, Zellers and Loblaws. Go to bandai.com for more.

6 **Portable toy detective set**, $16.99 at Winners. For more, call 1-877-946-6877 or visit winners.ca.

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Life of the party



Dessert shooters, $14.99 for a pack of eight. Flavours include praline and raspberry with white chocolate and cocoa. Available at Metro, metro.ca.

Cadbury Hot Chocolate Drink Maker, $59.95. Available at Walmart, Kitchen Stuff Plus, Blockbuster, Stokes, Giant Tiger, and other select retailers across Canada. Go to canada.cadbury.com for more.





Indigolife Festive Crackers, $15.99 for a pack of 10, at Indigo stores across Canada.



Irresistibles European Biscuits, $9.99, at Metro. For more, go to metro.ca.



Green & Black's Organic Seasonal Edition Miniature Bar Collection, $22.59. For more, go to greenandblacks.com.



PC Truffles dusted with cocoa powder, $5, and **PC Chocolate Covered Gingerbread Bites,** $6. For more, go to pc.ca.



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Holiday Shopping Guide

Gifts for the film buff



This G.I. Joe A Real American Hero: Complete Collectors Set comes in a toolbox with a lot of extras, including a G.I. dog tag flash drive.

PETER HOWELL
for Metro Canada

DVDs were designed to make the home movie-watching experience more convenient, by miniaturizing the film and the packaging.

But at this time of the year, they go in the opposite direction, losing all sense of proportion in the quest to separate movie lovers from their money.

Studios and distributors roll out the big boxes of films and artists they deem most gift-worthy, and there's no limit to their size or imagination.

Here's a selection of some of the more interesting sets, with suggestions as to whom might most like to find them under the Christmas tree.

Prices quoted may vary, so shop around for sales.



The Gone With the Wind: Ultimate Collector's Edition Blu-Ray, includes recreations of theatre posters.

For the true film aficionado

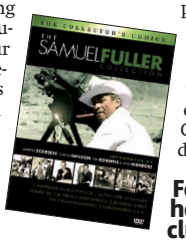
AK 100: 25 Films by Akira Kurosawa, $364

There's almost no part of arthouse or mainstream moviegoing that Japan's Akira Kurosawa hasn't influenced: The Hidden Fortress became George Lucas' template for Star Wars; Seven Samurai started as a western tribute and turned into a much-copied icon; and Rashomon changed narrative cinema forever with its multiple-viewer approach to a crime story. Kurosawa is considered by many critics to be the greatest director who ever lived, and this magnificent Criterion set celebrates what would have been his 100th birthday. It features 25 of the films he made over his 50-year career (including four previously unavailable on DVD) plus a hardcover book of photos, descriptions and commentaries.

For the romantic & the restless

Gone With the Wind: Ultimate Collector's Edition Blu-Ray, $62

Franky, my dear, if you're a fan of this Civil War love saga, 70 years old this year, you probably already own at least one copy on VHS or DVD. But if you're looking to get into Blu-Ray, here's your reason. The restored print is pristine, and comes with a host of extras, including recreations of theatre posters and pamphlets, and a wealth of historical info on the making of this undisputed classic.



For the gritty realist

Samuel Fuller Film Collection, $68

Under-appreciated in his lifetime, yet gaining belated kudos thanks to Quentin Tarantino, Martin Scorsese and other admirers, Samuel Fuller approached everything from drama to comedy at full-bore and without fear. This set collects seven films the former crime reporter directed or wrote for Columbia Pictures, including Shockproof and Underworld U.S.A.

For gung-ho regular joes

G.I. Joe A Real American Hero: Complete Collectors Set, $126

If you didn't get enough Joe from last summer's live-action movie adaptation, reload with this complete set of the cartoon series that started it all. Comes in a toolbox with a boatload of extras, including a G.I. dog tag flash drive.

For the light-hearted & the clumsy

National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation 20th Anniversary Collector's Edition, $42

If you're going to make a fool of yourself at Christmas, you might as well do it in style. This comedy favourite, featuring Chevy Chase's popular doofus Clark Griswold as a Yule Fool, celebrates its 20th anniversary with a Blu-Ray upgrade in a metal-can gift set that includes instant snow powder and drink coasters.



The National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation 20th Anniversary Collector's Edition includes instant snow powder and coasters.

For the feel-good fanatic

Forrest Gump: 15th Anniversary Chocolate Box Gift Set, $27

Life is like a box of chocolates and so is this bizarre gift set, which bundles the inspirational Tom Hanks starrer and Oscar winner inside a cavity-free candy container — would you believe the chocs are just scratch-and-sniff cardboard? But the set is loaded with featurettes and other extras that will make fans want to run with Forrest.

For the wild & not-so-innocent

Quentin Tarantino Collection, $40

Aw-right! The first six films from America's favourite former video stork clerk, from Reservoir Dogs to Pulp Fiction to Deathproof. Six-disc set come with a photo book and mini Kill Bill plastic samurai sword and stand. All you need now is Inglourious Basterds, his latest, which comes out on DVD this month.

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Zhu Zhu Pets creating a craze

When Lori Fowlkes first saw robotic Zhu Zhu Pets toy hamsters in September, she remembers her kids started jumping up and down and saying "Please! Please! Can we buy them?"

Seeing a fully stocked shelf, she decided to hold off until Christmas.

That was "before I knew that the hamsters would soon be off the shelves and more scarce than an H1N1 vaccine," said Fowlkes, 32.

Now she can't find them anywhere.

Zhu Zhu Pets, which retail for about $10, are this year's bona fide must-have toy, following in the footsteps of past crazes for **Tickle Me Elmo** and **Cabbage Patch Kids**. On resale websites like eBay and Craigslist, they fetch $40 or more. Vital accessories such as the hamster car and funhouse are sold separately. By many counts, the toy is an unlikely hit. They're in a field crowded with toy pets. The hamsters, which scurry around, make noises and drive cars, don't always work the way you expect and have a limited range of action.



Zhu Zhu Pets retail for about $10 and have quickly become this year's must have Christmas gift. Retailers are scratching their heads at how it happened while parents are getting creative in the hunt.

"Honestly, I don't really get it," said BMO Capital Markets analyst Gerrick Johnson. "But I don't need to get it for a toy to be hot."

They have one big thing going for them in tough economic times: They're cheap, Johnson said

"The last couple of years the robotic pet has been very popular, but those have been very expensive," like Hasbro's $250 robotic dinosaur **Kota the Triceratops**, he said. "But here's a version of a robotic pet that only costs $10."

Zhu Zhu Pets, aimed at three- to 10-year-olds, have rushed in to fill the void. But unlike past "It" toys made by large manufacturers like Mattel's **Tickle Me Elmo** and **Tiger Electronic's Furby**, **Zhu Zhu Pets** are made by tiny Cepia Inc. of St. Louis, with just 16 employees in the U.S. and 30 in China, making their success even more unlikely.

Creation of a craze

Just six years old, Cepia previously worked on an electronic dispensing device for consumer products before turning to toys and its only other product, a line of light-up bears called **Glo-E Bears**.

The company was started by toy industry vet Russ Hornsby, 56.

The success of **Zhu Zhu Pets** wasn't entirely accidental. The company got the word out with a savvy mix of local cable ads and parties thrown by "mommy bloggers."

Hornsby said he was hoping to sell three to four pets per store per week, but was secretly hoping for eight. The result, Hornsby said, was exponentially higher.

"The rate was so astonishing everybody had to go back and pinch themselves," Hornsby said. Toys "R" Us pulled all of the test data to make sure it wasn't being manipulated, Hornsby said.

Keeping up with demand

For parents, the hamster hunt is intense. A Facebook fan site tracks parent's search for the toys. Hornsby said he got a call at on his cellphone from a mom asking for hamsters.

"They're calling because they're upset and they feel we're not doing a good enough job getting merchandise on the shelves," Hornsby said.

But with retailers being extra cautious with orders this year following the dismal holiday season last year, the maker has had to scramble to make enough to catch up to demand.

Toy analyst Jim Silver at Timetoplaymag.com said it was late fall by the time Cepia and retailers realized how popular the toys were, and by that time it was difficult to increase production.

"You can't just go to China and flip a switch," he said.

But in the past three months, the company has added three more factories in China.

"Retailers are airlifting in millions of products," Hornsby said.

Despite the delays, Hornsby still estimates the company will sell $100 million in Zhu Zhu Pets by the end of the year.

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Light up Hanukkah

PARTY Hanukkah is a joyful holiday that comes with its own rituals, foods, games, songs and stories.

That makes it easy to throw a party, especially since the traditions can be enjoyed by guests of all ages and backgrounds.

Everyone loves yummy latkes and the sight of those beautiful menorah candles lighting up a dark winter night. But the parties are not only a way for Jewish families to share their heritage; they're also a way to connect with friends and neighbours. Here are some ideas for creating the perfect Hanukkah party.

Hanukkah begins Friday

Latkes

You can't have Hanukkah without latkes. These are pancakes made from shredded potatoes, onions and eggs, with a little salt and flour mixed in, then fried golden brown and served with applesauce and sour cream. You can buy them frozen and heat them up to ease your burdens as hostess, but making them from scratch is part of the fun.

Other Food

Fried food is traditional for Hanukkah, so try ready-made chicken wings.

Treats

Traditional sweets include jelly doughnuts (called sufganiyot) and chocolate coins covered in metal foil (called gelt). Put a bowl of chocolate gelt on the table, or hand out party bags with a dreidel and some chocolate coins in each.

Dreidels

To play dreidel, small wooden or plastic dreidels are best. You'll also need pennies, 10 for each player and more for a communal pot. If you don't have enough pennies, use dried beans, wrapped chocolate gelt or even poker chips.

Each side of the dreidel bears a different Hebrew letter. The letter facing up when the top stops spinning determines what happens in the game. Make a chart for the rules so everyone can follow.

Candles

Menorahs are lit at sundown. Make sure you have enough candles and set the menorahs in a spot where they won't pose a fire danger.

Many of your guests won't know how to sing the prayers, but all you need is a few strong voices to lead.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



LARRY CROWE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Latkes are a traditional Hanukkah food.

Celebrate with Snoopy
Peanuts holiday card, plays Christmas Is Coming, $21.99 for a box of five. Available at Hallmark. For more, go to hallmark.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide

The 12 spirits of Christmas

PETER ROCKWELL
for Metro Canada

Selecting the perfect liquid for those solids in your life can be a challenge; so here are my choice picks for every one of those beverage lovers in your life:

Best bets under $25



1 Wychwood Brewery Bah Humbug Christmas Ale, $3.45-$3.99*
Ebenezer Scrooge's face peering out from a beer label might scare the Dickens out of some, but this malty English brew will have the ale aficionados on your list drinking merry.



2 Faxe Premium Gift Pack, $9.85-$9.95
If you're going to gift just one beer this year, why not make it a big one? This crisp litre of lager is a food-friendly thirst-quencher that comes with its own mega mug.

3 Freixenet Cordon Rosado Brut, $12.95-$15.99
The bubbly berry goodness of this Spanish rosé will appeal to any wine lover. Perfect with food, it's a match made in brunch, lunch and dinner heaven.

4 Moselland 2008 Ars Vitis Riesling, $9.95-$17.99
Forget what it looks like in the glass, this refreshing, off-dry German white is a knockout while still in the bottle. The winter scene has a limited run; looking as good as the wine tastes.

Best bets under $50

5 Absolut Celebration Vodka, $25.95-$27.49
OK, so vodka can make for a pretty neutral gift. Wrapping it in a cool blue plastic casing (that throws a bit of a disco vibe) is something to celebrate. Absolut switches up the look each year so this one's for the collectors.

6 Sailor Jerry's Spiced Navy Rum, $26.95-$29
What's eggnog's best friend? Why an ounce or two of rum, spiced rum, of course. Sailor Jerry was a tattooist (hence the label) and his spicy spirited namesake takes mixed drinks to the next level.



7 Chambord Liqueur, $36.99-$45.95
When it comes to fruit liqueurs, the ripe black raspberry intensity of Chambord (named for the French Château) can't be beat. It looks fine and tastes even better — especially when a few drops are added to white or sparkling wine.



8 Taylor Fladgate 10 Year Old Tawny Port, $34.95-$39.81
Port is the classic seasonal sipper with this full-figured style made from a blend of vintages no less than a decade old. Roaring fire not included.

Splurges $50+



9 Glenora Distillery Glen Breton Rare Single Malt Canadian Whisky, $74.95-$89.55
Though scotch connoisseurs may poohpooh mainstream Canadian whisky, this Nova Scotian is the only single malt version made in North America and upstages its novelty with a great mouthfeel.

10 Patron Silver Tequila, $74.99-$89.99
High-end tequila is as mixable and shootable as the cheaper stuff — it just tastes a lot better. Co-owned by Dan Aykroyd, a bottle of white Patron will bring a smile to the face any spirit (or Ghostbuster) fan.

11 Bollinger Special Cuvée Champagne, $79.95-$82.92
For the 007 buff on your list, nothing will put the sparkle in their glass like a bottle of Bollinger. Rich and sophisticated, the Champagne maker has been Bond's on-screen choice since the days of Pierce Brosnan.



12 Remy Martin Louis XIII Cognac, $1,870-$2,400
There isn't a drop of booze inside this über-premium Backarack Crystal bottle under the age of 50 — making it the dream dram for cognac lovers and pretty good over ice with a splash of Coke.

Peter Rockwell is Metro's wine columnist. Check out his Liquid Assets column on Tuesdays or online at metronews.ca/liquidassets.

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Holiday Shopping Guide

Get wrapped up



Long knitted vest, $37.90 at Dynamite. For more, go to dynamite.ca.



Gratitude wrap, $128, at Lululemon. It's made with french terry light, and has hidden thumbholes to keep sleeves in place. For more, go to lululemon.com.



Brooks Vapor Dry 3D for women, $95. For more, go to brooks running.ca.



Cozy Up Jacket, $98, at Lululemon. For more, go to lululemon.com.



Multi-stripe wrap cardigan, $45.90 at Dynamite. For more, go to dynamite.ca.

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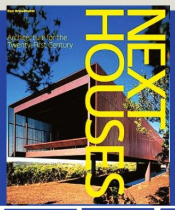
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EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

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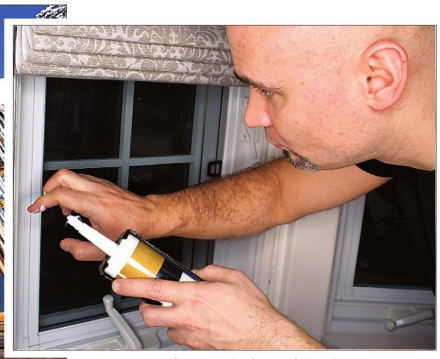
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Never too late to batten the hatches

'Winterizing' your home is a vital step for both comfort and your pocketbook

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada





Be sure to seal your windows this winter.

Old Man Winter doesn't like your house.

It's not you. It's him. With his combination of freezing temperatures, roaring winds and heaps of snow, how can the guy resist inching his way into every window crack, flooding unprotected nooks, and picking apart a structure so inferior to his climatic wrath?

But don't worry just yet; it's not too late to restore your blizzardy bond. Merv McBride, owner of home improvement chain Handyman Connection says by taking a few, economical steps to winterize your home, you can ward off damage and save money on home heating bills.

"When winterizing your home, you're really thinking about three things: Energy conservation and how to save money, how to preserve air quality and how to avoid any damage to your home," he says.

The greatest instance of damage for homes in locations that experience freeze-thaw cycles — like Southern Ontario and the West Coast — is the formation of ice-dams, says McBride. That's when heat escapes through inadequate insulation in the attic, melting rooftop snow, damaging shingles and even leaking through the roof.

To prevent ice-dams, McBride suggests installing fresh batt or blow-in insulation. While it can get pricey, he says, "It's probably small in comparison to the money you're losing with the heat going through the ceiling, especially if you're in a very cold climate."

"If it's a crack in the frame, caulking is the way to go to seal that hole. If it's a loose window in the frame, your only choice is to put weather stripping in there."
Merv McBride, owner of home improvement chain Handyman Connection on windows

Flooding can also result from clogged eaves troughs, which McBride suggests clearing out well before winter descends. "If that water can't get away, it ends up running over the edge of the eaves and down to the foundation of your home," he says, "The ground's frozen, the warmest part is near the house and if you get a lot of water built up against the foundation, it could escape into your home."

As a general tip for homeowners across Canada, McBride says checking for, and sealing cracks in windows and doors can reduce escaping heat and utility bills.

"If it's a crack in the frame, caulking is the way to go to seal that hole. If it's a loose window in the frame, your only choice is to put weather stripping in there." To make sure your sealing is successful, turn off the lights, look outside and if you see light, McBride says it means air is entering and the crevasse must be covered.

Beyond conserving heat and protecting physical structure, taking strides to ensure there's good air quality in your home can promote good winter health. For grade-A air, McBride proposes having your furnace professionally checked each season and ensuring furnace filters are completely clean.

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Eco-friendly ways to decorate

BRING THE OUTDOORS IN

Search outside, says Atlanta-based interior designer Mallory Mathison, for natural materials such as "leaves, branches, cones of all types and berries." She creates holiday centrepieces by filling bowls or baskets with fresh fruits and vegetables.

EVERYTHING THAT'S OLD IS NEW AGAIN

"Everyone thinks eco-friendly means everything has to be made out of 'sustainable this' and 'sustainable that,'" Sabrina Soto, host of HGTV's Real Estate Intervention says. "But going to the thrift store is eco-friendly."

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Soto recommends swapping out old strands of Christmas lights for energy-saving LED lights. They're easy to find at various retailers. And for lots of shine with minimal electricity, use ornaments that catch light and reflect it.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS





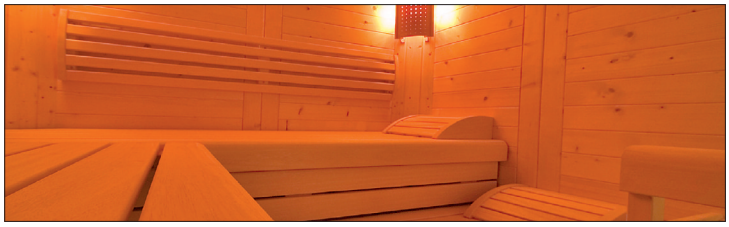
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Relax in a sauna on your own time

HomeScape




If relaxating is one of your favourite things to do, a sauna might be a good investment.

There are a few different ways to generate heat on cold evenings, but the one I was thinking about most recently, I must admit, is the sauna.

Not being of Finnish extraction, I first glimpsed an indoor sauna — a cedar-lined little room in the suburban basement of a friend's house — a few decades ago. We tried it out, but didn't really get it. Apparently, neither did the rest of my friend's family, since they started using it as a storage closet not long after that.

But times have changed. Spas and relaxation and walking around in big fluffy robes with white fuzzy slippers are big these days. And this could help explain why pre-built saunas, not very evident a few years ago, are now starting to appear in hardware and bath stores.

I now understand the appeal of the sauna more than I used to. Although not everyone would agree, there is a sizable group of people who believe that it's a wonderful feeling to sit in a hot wooden box and sweat, cool down (and perhaps roll in the snow), and then do it again. It relaxes, relieves stress, and creates a feeling of well-being. Plus, let's face it, it's a huge hoot.

Besides that, time in the sauna will provide temporary relief to otherwise healthy people who suffer pains and aches due to arthritis or strenuous physical activity. All that sweating is good for the skin as well, since it washes out impurities. Although it isn't medically proven, anecdotal evidence suggests there may be other benefits, such as detoxification (the sweating out of toxins accumulated in the body), weight loss as a result of a revved-up metabolism, among others.

For the die-hard traditionalist, the old-fashioned Finnish sauna, built outdoors with a wood-heated stove, is still the only way to go. Without the high heat, the hiss of water on stone, and the ancient rituals of the sauna, they're just not happy.

Of course, there are all sorts of other possibilities — just check online and you'll see the huge range of saunas, both traditional with different types of heaters and infrared, for indoor and outdoor, in different sizes and finishes, and in every price range, from $1,000 for a small portable unit up to $5,000 or more for a large four-person cedar pre-fab unit.

Sylvia Putz is a journalist with an interest in decor and design. She's written for the TV show Arresting Design; sputz@arrestingdesign.com.

Affordable homes will not last much longer

LegalMatters



If you are contemplating the purchase of a newly built home, you may want to make your decision soon. Otherwise the purchase could cost you about $7,000 more.

As of Dec. 7, the provincial government's website indicated that 1,309 applicants were eligible for the New Home Construction Rebate.

This one-time rebate, equivalent to 50 per cent of the provincial portion of the HST, is available to a maximum of 1,500 people who construct their own homes or purchase a newly built home. The rebate is capped at $7,000 and the program ends on March 31, 2010.

To qualify for the rebate, which is only available for homes where the owners live on a permanent basis, the municipal building must be dated on or after Jan. 1, 2009 and construction must be completed, or the purchase transaction closed, by March 31, 2010. According to several builders, it is still possible to commence a house and have it completed by the program deadline. This potential is limited to certain home styles and sizes and requires a building lot that is ready for construction. However, the timelines are short and are now vulnerable to weather delays.

Considering the time constraints associated with the applications, homes that are close to completion or ready for occupancy have become an extremely attractive options for buyers.

A search of mls.ca revealed dozens of new construction homes for sale in HRM. With many of these homes being under $250,000, historically low interest rates, and an extra $1500.00 rebate for first-time buyers, it is a great opportunity to purchase a home. It is not typical for homeownership to be more affordable than renting.

With less than 200 applications available for the New Home Construction Rebate, this prime opportunity to buy will not last long.

Elias Metlej is a real estate lawyer with the Halifax firm Blois Nickerson & Bryson. You can write to Elias at askelias@yahoo.com

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Hilfiger's estate sells for $20M

Fashion designer Tommy Hilfiger's luxury estate in Connecticut has sold for $20 million, about $8 million below its original asking price. The 20,000-square-foot Greenwich mansion is being purchased by a family who toured it in September. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Style



Silverware's second life

Old utensils take on a whole new meaning (and function) once artist Danielle O'Connor is done with them. The Ontario-based award-winning jewelry designer is the creator of the Original Beaded Silverware Bracelet — made from old forks, spoons and butter knives and adorned with glass beads and wire. Starting at $30, each piece is one of a kind and can be adjusted to fit any wrist size. For a retailer near you or to purchase online, visit danielleoconnorjewellery.com. METRO NEWS SERVICE

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Be a man: Wear a skirt

Effeminate runway trend goes mainstream at H&M

HIMANI EDIRIWEERA
for Metro Canada

The evolution of man continues on the runway as the man-skirt is officially introduced into the mainstream fashion lexicon as part of H&M's 2010 spring collection for men.

Designers started putting men in skirts and sending them down the runway but the world did not really take notice until high profile designer Marc Jacobs started appearing in one for shows and events a few seasons ago.

Social conditioning that skirts are for women are being challenged with designers like Prada, Yves Saint Laurent and Alexander McQueen unveiling long and short skirts, pleated skirts and kilts, for men.

After all, men have been wearing skirts as part of native attire for years — the Scottish kilt, the Greek foustanella, the dhoti and lungi in India, the sarong in Southeast Asia, and the lavalava in Samoa.

Western culture has long resisted the man-skirt, holding fears of it being branded as effeminate.

"Our spring collection has a strong global inspiration."
Karen Richter, showroom manager at H&M Canada

"Our spring collection has a strong global inspiration and many ethnic influences," said Karen Richter, showroom manager at H&M Canada. "Men wearing skirts is common in many other cultures around the world."

H&M shows the pleated skort with a graphic T-shirt, a tailored blazer, leggings and a tough boot.

Also, H&M is bringing back an old look. Drop-crotch pants, or harem pants, for the urban man — a look some might remember from the late '80s.

It's a trend that can be seen on men and women in Europe but North Americans can't seem to let go of MC Hammer and "…Can't Touch This," look.

Givenchy, Dior Homme, Phillip Lim, Giorgio Armani, Ralph Lauren and many others designers have re-introduced the drop-crotch silhouette.

H&M shows the harem pants with a bright T-shirt, graphic maxi scarf and a cotton spring jacket.

And, bringing that avant-garde look, along with the man-skirt in March 2010, H&M brings other daring looks to its spring collection for men looking to embrace future fashion trends.

"There are certain male customers who are always looking to be one step ahead of the trends and who like to stand out from the crowd," Richter said. "(Look for) lots of florals, bright colours, embroidery and beading, which are all details that are often unexpected in a men's collection."



H&M's men "skort," left ($59.95), hits stores mid-March at select stores.



Left: A man "tutu" seen as part of the Prada fall/winter 2008/2009 men's collection.

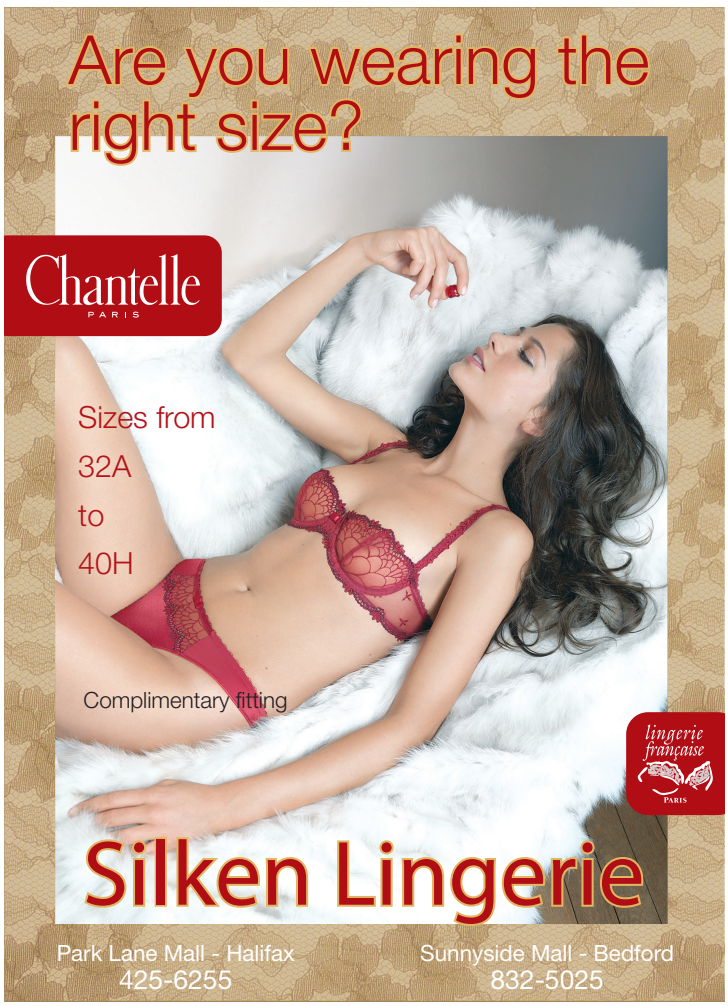
Designer skirt watch

- Designer Marc Jacobs wears a skirt to the launch of V61, an event hosted by V magazine, this past September. Jacobs also sported the trend at the Marc By Marc Jacobs Spring 2010 fashion show at The Armory in New York.



GETTY IMAGES

METRO NEWS SERVICE



Canada's coat couture

Ten homegrown designers give the country's iconic cloak a makeover

It may be the closest thing Canada has to a national costume — and it has just undergone an extreme makeover.

The famous Hudson's Bay Co. blanket coat, the iconic striped wool coat that's still available for purchase in its traditional format, has been remodelled into a fashion statement by 10 of Canada's top designers.

"We were looking for a collaboration so we could do something special around the Olympics to get the brand out there and also promote Canadian fashion design to the world," says Bay fashion director Suzanne Timmins.

So a collection of "flawed" Hudson's Bay coats that had never made the sales floor because of their imperfections, were given to 10 local fashion designers to be reconfigured into something that reflected the coat's traditions, as well as the designer's esthetic.

Designers including Comrags, Jeremy Laing, Canada's Todd Lynn (living in London) and Montrealer Erdem Moralioglu, also based in London, participated in the project. Timmins insists there were no creative limitations.

They could keep it real or be completely fanciful, she says. Joyce Gunhouse and Judy Cornish, the names behind the Comrags label, created a sweeping floor-length coat with a detachable bustle.

Erdem created one of his famous capes. And Laing's coat was chic, urban and asymmetrical.

None of the coats will be offered for sale, though Timmins admits she was so taken with the results of the collaboration that she is considering the possibility of putting some into production.

The problem is that this textile is created and manufactured exclusively for HBC. The company would have to source a different material for the coats, she says. The 10 coats will be on display at the downtown store until Christmas, then move on to the Canada House lounge in their downtown Vancouver store.



Right: Comrags' sweeping floor-length coat with a detachable bustle.

Timmins is a fan of the coat and its remarkable history in Canada. "It was our first currency — trading blankets for furs.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

HBC collection

• The project is part of a larger branding scheme that's called Hudson's Bay Company collection, which includes collaborations with other designers including Kimberley Newport-Mimran of Pink Tartan, who designed a cardigan with the same trademark stripes.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

*Offer applies to H&M stores in Canada only - for a limited time. The offer is not valid in conjunction with any other offer, discount or previously purchased merchandise.



SALE - UP TO 50% OFF!*

On selected items for women, men, teens and kids.





Team spirit tees

NHL fans can score an Old Navy hockey "jersey" with new limited edition two-in-one shirts for boys and girls. They feature teams such as the Toronto Maple Leafs, Ottawa Senators and more. Kids shirts are $18.50 and baby tees are $16.50. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Deciphering Mrs. O's style

New book examines first lady's fashion choices over the past year

KENYA HUNT
Metro World News

Mary Tomer, the woman behind the hugely popular website, Mrs. O (mrs-o.org), has released the book Mrs. O: The Face of Fashion Democracy, which examines Michelle Obama's personal style.

An advertising account planner by day, Tomer has spent her free time during the past 12 months tirelessly cataloguing the US first lady's outfits, which is no easy task. (Is that belt Azzedine Alaïa or J.Crew?) It involves a certain amount of detective work, including countless hours studying runway photos on Style.com and sending emails to fashion publicity firms.

As a result, Tomer's site has become a must-read for industry insiders, fashion lovers and Ms. Obama fans alike.

Here Tomer breaks down the method behind her website:

Sussing out Mrs. Obama's favourites: "When I was starting up the blog, I would religiously study the top collections of the season on Style.com. Early on, I became aware that Ikram Goldman was an influential force in Michelle Obama's wardrobe, so I particularly studied up on the designers carried in her Chicago boutique," she explains.

Canvassing the fashion brands: "There was one Mrs. O mystery look that I was determined to include in this book, but I had to identify the designer in order to do so. As I was doing research and interviews for the book, I would ask various PR people if their designer was responsible," she says. "Someone finally pointed me to Jonathan Saunders and I then confirmed with his PR team. They weren't previously aware that the first lady had worn the dress and were delighted."

Building a helpful peanut gallery: "If I wasn't sure (of an outfit), I would throw out a few suggestions on the blog, and see what the site community thought. The site community has grown considerably, so even when I'm stuck, someone on the blog can weigh in to help me identify the designer."

First lady face-off

- Michelle Obama beat out Carla Bruni for the first spot in French Elle's annual "Political Chic" best-dressed list. The magazine gave the American first lady credit for her adventurous style and her penchant for wearing younger, emerging designers such as Jason Wu.

KENYA HUNT/ METRO WORLD NEWS



Right: Mrs. O: The Face of Fashion Democracy by Mary Tomer is available at Chapters and Indigo stores across the country or online at chapters.indigo.ca for $31.99.

This Holiday Season, think outside the big box... think
spring garden
Always in season.
www.springgardenroad.com

Hepburn's chic, classic wardrobe for sale in London

AUCTION Audrey Hepburn fans now have a chance to purchase dozens of garments and personal effects once belonging to the movie star in an auction that began this week in London.

A Givenchy cocktail dress and cropped jacket made from black lace — which Hepburn wore in the 1966 romantic comedy How to Steal a Million, co-starring Peter O'Toole — is expected to fetch the sale's highest price of between 15,000-20,000 pounds — though auctioneer Kerry Taylor acknowledges the estimates are very approximate. She said that clothes having once belonged to Hepburn, who died in 1993, rarely come to auction and the last two pieces fetched a whopping US$1 million.

"These are harder times, and I've tried to keep my feet on the ground," she said, adding that lots start at an estimated 250 pounds for a straw hat Another headpiece, a domed hat by Givenchy in green velvet with dangling beaded and feathered tassels, was featured in a 1964 Vogue shoot, and is estimated at 800-1,200 pounds.

Most of the lots come from the closets of Tanja Star-Busmann, a longtime friend of the actress. The two met in London when Tanja was 15 years old and Hepburn 20 — just before her career took off. "I was perhaps her first unofficial fan - writing letters to her from boarding school and receiving replies," Star-Busmann, who is now in her 70s, wrote in the auction catalogue. In addition to letters — some of which are to be sold — Hepburn also regularly gave her young confidant her hand-me-downs, which became increasingly fabulous as her star rose.

"Over the years, a cavalcade of boxes filled to the brim . . . arrived at my door," wrote Star-Busmann. "Unpacking them was always like Xmas all over."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wedding gown

- Another ivory wedding gown, made for Hepburn by the Rome-based Fontana sisters, is expected to fetch 8,000-12,000 pounds pounds — though Hepburn herself didn't wear it down the aisle.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



FRANCOIS MORI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Audrey Hepburn's black lace Givenchy dress.

Fashion puts the zipper on display

An open zipper is an embarrassing faux pas, but an exposed zipper is all the rage.

The utilitarian garment closure is suddenly in the spotlight as a decorative trim on accessories.

The Ugly Betty of the notions family, the zipper, with its garish metal teeth, was never admired like the button, its close cousin which performs a similar fastening function and is proudly on display for all the world to see.

Even the zipper's birthplace is uncertain. It is often claimed to have been invented in Canada by Swede Gideon Sundback, who patented a fastener design in 1917 and manufactured them in St. Catharines, Ont. Evidence exists, however, suggesting American Elias Howe held an earlier patent (1851) on a gizmo resembling the modern zipper.

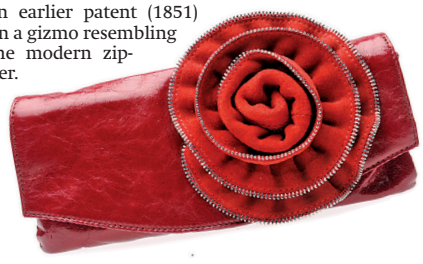
While fashion readily embraced the design for its modernity and practicality, the zip was always hidden by plackets and folds of fabric. In the past few seasons, it was Lanvin designer Alber Elbaz who left the closures uncovered on his beautiful silk frocks, showing off the industrial-looking metal track like an exposed spine.

Now it appears that fashion is having a full-blown affair with the now-fashionable fastener and embracing it for purely decorative purposes. Suddenly those jagged little teeth are a thing of beauty.

Zippers are now folded and furled as pretty rosettes on a necklace or tied into pretty bows for your hair. They even outshine their functional counterparts on boots, snaking seductively around the foot.

No longer just a zip, they've got sizzle.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



This red clutch with zipper-lined flower is $138 from Aldo.

It's a boy for Bundchen and Brady
Gisele Bundchen has given birth to a healthy baby boy, according to People magazine, although she and Tom Brady did not release details on the birth or the name of the newborn. **METRO WORLD NEWS**

Entertainment



Extortion threat
John Stamos was the target of an alleged extortion attempt. Stamos says he was blackmailed for $680,000 US by a man and woman claiming they had threatening photos of the former Full House star. TVGUIDE.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

🌐🌐🌐🌐🌐 A CLASSIC; 🌐🌐🌐🌐 EXCELLENT; 🌐🌐🌐 GOOD; 🌐🌐 FAIR; 🌐 POOR

Sorry attempt to apologize

Chris Brown

Album: Graffiti
Label: Jive/Sony Music
Rating: 🌐



CHRIS BROWN SHOULD have waited a year before releasing a new record, as it's impossible not to listen to this and hear another half-hearted attempt to apologize for beating the pulp out of Rihanna, while making himself out to be the wounded boyfriend. Famous Girl is the most explicit song about his ex. And an offensive one at that. "You were the first to play games," "Keisha would have told me I was sent from heaven," "Some famous girls will break your heart" — classic blame the victim behaviour. Skip this disingenuous — and musically vapid — disc.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

CharlotteGainsbourg

Album: IRM
Label: Because/Warner
Rating: 🌐🌐🌐🌐



THIS ALBUM SHOULD be co-credited to Beck, who wrote all of the music and co-wrote the lyrics. Named after the traumatic brain hemorrhage Charlotte suffered after a water-skiing accident, IRM is a collaboration that's as much the influence of her parents (Serge Gainsbourg and Jane Birkin) as it is Beck's recent string of studio quickies. While it's their duet on Heaven Can Wait and the crank eccentricity of Greenwich Mean Time that will attract his fans, it's the lush, seductive orchestrations peppered throughout and psychedelic sound collages like IRM and Trick Pony that make it her album and not just Beck's pet project.

Cam Lindsay/for Metro Canada



Chris Brown makes a half-hearted attempt to apologize on Graffiti.

Neil Young

Album: Dreamin' Man
Label: Reprise/Warner
Rating: 🌐🌐🌐🌐



WINNIPEG-RAISED Neil Young can't do anything wrong, even when he releases his least exciting live album to date. Dreamin' Man was recorded in 1992 and features every song off Harvest Moon. In terms of the singer-songwriters' live discs, it's not as thrilling as Live at Massey Hall or Live at the Fillmore East, but it's still damn good. It's just Young and his acoustic playing mellow renditions of the already low-key Harvest Moon. It's haunting and dramatic and his voice is in perfect shape. An excellent holiday gift for the Neil lover.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

AlbumReviews

music@metronews.ca

m.metronews.ca

Scan this barcode to read reviews of new music from Clipse, Juvenile and 30 Seconds to Mars





No purchase necessary. Enter daily for more chances to win. Contest open to Canadian residents of legal age, excluding residents of Quebec. Contest closes Dec. 21st at 11:59pm. Odds of winning depend on number of entries received. For full contest rules and details, visit www.metronews.ca.



Jennifer to play Adam's Eve

Jennifer Aniston will play Adam Sandler's wife in a new movie. The actress is reportedly in negotiations to star opposite the actor in a romantic comedy, The Pretend Wife. Plot details are being kept firmly under wraps. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Old friends tackle post-apartheid

Nelson Mandela made it clear that Morgan Freeman was the man he would want to play him in a film.

When it came time to play Mandela in Invictus, Freeman told producing partner Lori McCreary that he had two men in mind to direct the film, which dramatizes Mandela's partnership with a South African rugby star (played by Matt Damon) to rally their post-apartheid countrymen behind the team's underdog quest for the 1995 World Cup.

"I said, 'I can only think of two. Clint Eastwood, and then there's Clint Eastwood.' He's the best director I know," Freeman says of the filmmaker who gave him a plum role in Unforgiven and an Academy Award-winning part in Million Dollar Baby.

Freeman's comment comes moments before Eastwood enters the room for a joint interview, amiable banter and wisecracks ensuing as the two longtime friends and colleagues talk about their third collaboration.



Unforgiven buddies Eastwood and Freeman back in the saddle for Invictus, which opens in theatres tomorrow.

Informed of the compliment Freeman had just paid him as his only choice to direct Invictus, Eastwood shoots back: "That's very kind of him. He's obviously a man of very good taste and selectivity in life."

Freeman follows with a reminder that Eastwood had once "stood up in public with a microphone and called me the best actor in the world."

The exchange continues:

Eastwood: "That was right after I told Matt that he was the best actor in the world."

Freeman: "Doesn't matter . . . You always go for the best."

Eastwood: "I do pride myself on that. I believe in surrounding myself with the very best people, and that cuts down the margin for error, and that covers my inadequacies."

Invictus opens in theatres tomorrow

Freeman: "And he says, he can stand back and let them do their thing, then take all the credit."

With Invictus, Freeman was the first man on board, sending the script Eastwood's way, hoping his friend would want to direct.

Freeman had been meeting with Mandela since the 1990's with the idea of adapting the jailed-activist-turned-president's memoir Long Walk to Freedom for the big-screen. Then journalist John Carlin told Freeman about his book, Playing the Enemy: Nelson Mandela and the Game That Made a Nation, recounting the new South African president's cheerleading that united whites and blacks behind the national rugby team.

The effort defined the healing spirit Mandela brought to the nation, Freeman says.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barker finally settles lawsuit over fatal '08 plane crash

LEGAL Former Blink-182 drummer Travis Barker has settled his lawsuit against several companies over a plane crash in South Carolina last year that killed four people, attorneys said Tuesday.

Barker was one of two survivors of the Sept. 19, 2008 crash that killed two pilots and two of his friends. Another survivor, celebrity disc jockey DJ AM, has since died of an accidental drug overdose.



Travis Barker

The terms of the settlement are confidential, said William L. Robinson, an attorney representing some of the companies sued by Barker, including Learjet, Goodyear Tire&Rubber Co. and the plane's owners and contractors.

Barker's attorney Walter Lack confirmed the settlement but declined further comment.

Barker sued a year ago, claiming the companies improperly operated and maintained the Learjet that overshot the runway and burst into flames.

The case was delayed while the National Transportation Safety Board completed its investigation into why the private plane failed to takeoff from an airport in Columbia, S.C.

The pilots were trying to abort takeoff at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport when the accident happened.

Barker and DJ AM, whose real name is Adam Goldstein, suffered serious burns in the crash. Goldstein died in New York on Aug. 28. Medical examiners determined he died of a lethal cocktail of prescription drugs and cocaine.

Barker filed his lawsuit along with the mother of his bodyguard, Charles Monroe Still Jr., who was killed in the crash. Still's mother has also settled her case, court filings show.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HA	H	D	B	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
12/10/09 primetime	31	31	31 ABC	News Center 5	ABC Wld News	Inside Edition	Better Living	FlashForward (HDTV)		Grey's Anatomy (HDTV)		Practice
	7	7	7 ASN	The Road to Avonlea		Degrassi: TNG	TMZ (N)	FlashForward (HDTV)		Fringe "Grey Matters"		Practice
	11	11	11 CBC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Steven and Chris (N)		The Border (N)		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	2	2	2 CBC-F	Pyramide (SC)	Union-force	Virginie (SC)	Gars fille	Les Années Derome (N) (SC)		3600 secondes d'extase (SC)		Le Téléjournal
	32	32	32 CBS	WBZ News (N)	Evening News	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Survivor: Samoa (N)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigat'n		The Mentalist
	69	69	69 CFTM	TVA nouvelles	Le Cercle (SC)	La Fièvre de la danse (SC)		Juste pour rire (SC)		Mad Dog, l'homme		TVA nouvelles
	6	6	6 CIHF	Entertainment	ET Canada	90210 (HDTV) (N)		Survivor: Samoa (N)		The Office (N)	The Office	News Final (N)
	9	9	9 CJCH	etalk	Hollywood	The Mentalist (HDTV) (N)		The Vampire Diaries		CSI: Crime Scene Investigat'n		News
	10	10	10 ELTV	(6) EastLink Television				Podium TV		Community Matters		
	36	36	36 FOX	Seinfeld	The Simpsons	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Bones (HDTV PA) (N)		Fringe "Grey Matters"		Fox First
	12	12	12 NBC	News (N)	NBC News	Hollywood	Extra (N)	Community (N)	Parks/Recreat	The Office (N)	30 Rock	Jay Leno Show
	29	29	29 NW	(6) Power & Politics		Connect Today's biggest stories. (N)				CBC News: The National		Nature-Things
	4	4	4 PBS-B	PBS NewsHour (N)		Greater Boston	Rick Steves' European Christmas				Celtic Woman: Songs From	
	35	35	35 PBS-D	PBS NewsHour (N)		Business Rpt.	Worldfocus	Get Curious Not Furious True Colors			Change Your Brain, Change	
	68	68	68 TQS	Guerre clans	Le Mur	Smile TV (N)	Criss Angel	*Magie blanche* ★★ (2005, Drame) Mary Tyler Moore.				Guerre clans
news	23	96	96 BNN	Business News	Headline	Market Call Tonight		GetConnected	Market Call	Squeeze Play		Business News
	18	18	18 CNN	Situation Room-Wolf Blitzer		CNN Tonight (N)		Campbell Brown (N)		Larry King Live (N)		Cooper 360
sports	54	54	54 GOLF	Golf Central	Profiles-Pro	Ultimate Matches			Champions Year End Special		USGA Championship Season	
	52	52	52 RSE	Connected W-Prime Time		Stars of Torino	Sportsnet Con.	NFL Football Pittsburgh Steelers at Cleveland Browns. (HDTV) (Live)				
	55	55	55 SCOR	HSR	Covers Experts	Score on NFL	Score Today	FullTiltPoker.net Million		Canadian Poker Tour		Score Now
	45	45	45 SPD	Unique Whips		Pass Time	Pass Time	Pinks -- All Out (HDTV)		Pinks -- All Out	Jacked!	Wrecked
	53	53	53 TSN	Off the Record	SportsCentre	That's Hockey!	Stars of Torino	Curling 2009 Tim Hortons Roar of the Rings. (HDTV) (Live)				
family	43	43	43 FAM	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Sonny Chance	Zack & Cody	Overruled!	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Latest Buzz	Ned's School
	44	44	44 TOON	Jimmy Two	Johnny Test	Stoked	Total Drama	6TEEN (DVS)		Futurama	King of the Hill	*Ghost World*
	26	26	26 TREE	Blue's Holiday	Berry Merry Christmas		Night Garden	Waybuloo	Franklin	Fourth King	Maggie-Beast	Babar
	27	27	27 YTV	iCarly	iCarly	iCarly	Sabrina-Witch	Malcolm-Mid.	Hates Chris	8 Simple Rules	What I Like	Family Biz
cable variety	16	16	16 A&E	The First 48 (HDTV)		Criminal Minds (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48
	70	70	70 APTN	APTN National News (N)		Wapos Bay	By the Rapids	Over the Bolts	Moose TV	*Parenthood* ★★★ (1989, Comedy)		
	50	50	50 BET	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live Rihanna performs. (Live)				*Coming to America* ★★★ (1988, Comedy) Eddie Murphy, Arsenio Hall.				
	37	37	37 BRVO	Wind at My Back		Storytellers	PhotoXplorers	Bathroom Divas-Opera Star		*Everything's Gone Green* (2006, Comedy)		
	25	25	25 CMT	Wilsons	Wilsons	Amer. Funniest Home Videos		Reba	Reba	According-Jim	According-Jim	Home Improve.
	49	49	49 COM	Just for Laughs		Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	Hot Box
	153	153	153 COURT	Truth, Duty, Valour		Struggle for Justice		Cops Uncut	Dumb Criminal	Psychic Detect	Haunting Evid.	Justice
	38	38	38 DISC	How It's Made	How It's Made	Daily Planet (N)		Life "Plants" (N)		Life "Primates" (N)		MythBusters
	48	48	48 HGTV	Extreme Makeover: Home		House Hunters	Property Virgin	Holmes Inspection		Renovation	Disaster DIY	House Hunters
	46	46	46 HIST	Underworld Histories		Ice Road Truckers		Ancient Discoveries		Underworld Histories		After People
	17	17	17 MM	To Be Announced		To Be Announced		Video on Trial	disBAND	Jonas Brothers	Muchmusic Countdown	
	19	19	19 MMM	mmtop10.ca		The Daily Fix		Ranked!		VH1 Divas (N)		
	201	201	201 M1	(6:30) *Vantage Point*		(8:15) *The Necessities of Life* (2008, Drama)				*Waltz With Bashir* (2008, Documentary)		
	48	23	23 OLN	Mantracker		Ghost Hunters International		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman		Ghost Hunters
	51	51	51 PEACH	The Office	Name Is Earl	Family Guy	Family Guy	House-Payne	House-Payne	Law & Order: SVU		*Crocodile Dun.*
	206	206	206 PIX	(7:10) *Gone Dark* (2003, Crime Drama)			(8:35) *Column South* (1953, Western)			*The Big Hit* ★★ (1998, Action)		
	67	67	67 RDI	RDI monde	RDI économie	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI économie
	39	39	39 SHOW	Trailer Park	Trailer Park	The Outer Limits		Da Vinci's City Hall		Found.	Paradise Falls	Bones
	40	40	40 SLICE	Skin Deep	Skin Deep	Rich Bride, Poor Bride		X-Weighted "Randi"		X-Weighted "Valencia"		X-Weighted
	47	47	47 SPACE	Stargate SG-1		Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Star Trek: Voyager		*SS Doomtrooper* (2006, Science Fiction)		
	14	14	14 SPIKE	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		UFC Unleashed		UFC Unleashed		TNA Wrestling (HDTV) (N)		
	98	98	98 STAR	etalk	TMZ (N)	Look-A-Like	TMZ	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		The View (HDTV) (N)		Dr. Oz Show
	21	21	21 TLC	Say Yes-Dress	Say Yes-Dress	BBQ Pitmasters (HDTV)		American Chopper		American Chopper (N)		BBQ Pit
	34	34	34 TROP	Bob & Doug	Bob & Doug	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	The Outer Limits		ET Canada	TV Made, Do It	Family Guy
	20	20	20 TV5	Que.-champion	Journal de Fr2	Patagonie à tous vents		Club social		Envoyé spécial		
	28	28	28 V	Jozi-H		Murder, She Wrote		On the Buses	'Allo, 'Allo!	*Christmas Coal Mine Miracle* ★★ (1977)		
	97	97	97 VIVA	Da Vinci's Inquest		Cold Case "Sleepover"		Missing "Unnatural Disaster"		The Closer "Overkill"		Cold Case
	22	22	22 W	House-Sell	Confidential	Friends	Friends	*Home by Christmas* (2006, Drama) Linda Hamilton.				*Very Merry*
	251	251	251 WGN	WGN Evening News		Two/Half Men	Family Guy	The Vampire Diaries		Supernatural "The End"		WGN News

critics' corner

The Border

What's coltan? It's an ore from which tantalum, used in electronics, is extracted. Like diamonds, it can be obtained from both clean and questionable sources. The Democratic Republic of Congo falls in the latter column because the coltan trade is linked to the violence there. In this new episode, Kessler, Darnell and Charlotte (James McGowan, Jim Codrington, Daisy Beaumont) discover a Canadian link to a Congolese coltan smuggling operation. 9 PM on CBC

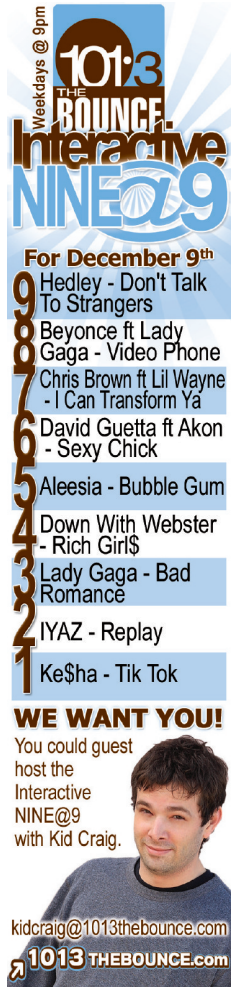


Steven and Chris

Daytime television fixtures Steven Sabados and Chris Hyndman get in the how-to holiday spirit with this prime-time special edition of their show, packed with tips for making the season special. Joining the duo are Debbie Travis, Arlene Dickinson and George Stroumboulopoulos. Natalie Cole, Chantal Kreviazuk and Suzanne Somers also appear. 8 PM on CBC

Bones

Brennan and Booth (Emily Deschanel, David Boreanaz) investigate after a man dressed as Santa Claus is blown up following a botched bank robbery. On the home front, Brennan's father (guest star Ryan O'Neal) invites a distant relative, Margaret Whitesell (guest star Zooey Deschanel, Emily's real-life sister), to spend Christmas with him and his daughter in the new episode "The Goop on the Girl." 9 PM on FOX



Halifax's Pipa honoured
Where magazine has announced its list of Best New Restaurants of 2009. Halifax's Pipa Restaurant and Bar made the cut. Visit where.ca for the complete list. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Urban Foodie

●●●●● INSPIRED; ●●●● VERY GOOD; ●●● PALATABLE; ●● HO-HUM; ● NEVER AGAIN

Cut Steakhouse burgers a big hit

VALERIE MANSOUR
HalifaxFoodie@gmail.com

Cut Steakhouse & Urban Grill
5120 Salter St.
Halifax 429-5120
cutsteakhouse.ca

Signature Drink:
Prosecco
Signature Dish:
Porterhouse Steak
Rating: ●●●●
Dinner & drinks for 2: $75



Steak Frites ($19)



VALERIE MANSOUR/FOR METRO HALIFAX

Single Ground Burger ($12).

Cut Steakhouse caused a sensation when it opened two years ago. High-end steaks and $6 baked potatoes put it in a class of its own.

Our less extravagant tastes lead us to the busy and loud downstairs grill. We sit at a booth with an exquisite chandelier overhead.

Over our beers we mull the menu's steaks, burgers and "stuff that doesn't come from the butchery." We settle on Steak Frites (6 oz. $19) a dry aged striploin, medium rare as requested, with fat and yummy fries and house-made tomato basil ketchup.

On the web

- Get recipes and more great food content at metronews.ca/recipes

My Single Ground Burger ($12) is the best I've had in this town.

Substantial, nicely garnished and of obviously high quality meat, we declare it better than our steak.

A perfect accompaniment is the Chopped Salad Grill ($10) of greens, avocado, corn kernels, blue corn tortilla crisps, aged gouda, free range poussin (baby chicken), and its superb original and sharp chipotle pommery mustard dressing.

Our efficient server seems to be on automatic, but anyone who can serve a burger this fine is okay with me.



Chopped Salad Grill ($10)

On the web



Global Peasant:
- Visit metronews.ca/globalpeasant for a recipe of Orange Spice Molasses Cookies.

Dining out

NOT A BAAAD IDEA
Brooklyn Warehouse, 2795 Windsor St., presents Holidays in Brooklyn — A Local Lamb Tasting with Bill Wood from Wood 'n' Heart Farm, Sunday, Dec. 20, 6:30 p.m. Four courses cost $50 per person. Call 446-8181 for reservations, or visit brooklynwarehouse.ca for more information.

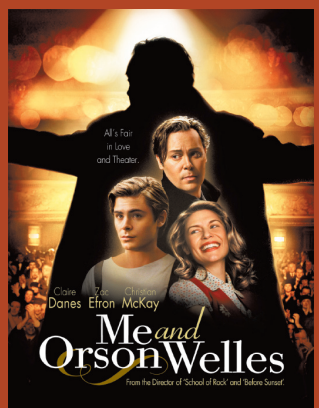
ZEE FRENCH TOAST
FID Resto, 1569 Dresden Rd., has announced a new weekend brunch item: Zee French Toast: fresh brioche, from La Vendéenne bakery, fried and served with maple-whipped goat cheese and strawberry sauce. Call 422-9162 for information or visit fidresto.ca

In brief

XMAS MARKET The Hubbards Farmers' Market at the Hubbards Barn and Community Park (#57, Hwy 3) is hosting a very special Christmas Market this Saturday from 8 a.m. – noon. Visit hubbardsfarmers-market.com

SIGNING Chef Craig Flinn signs copies of Fresh Canadian Bistro at Box of Delights, Wolfville, this Saturday from 1 - 3 p.m.

YOU COULD
WIN
A PAIR OF RUN OF ENGAGEMENT PASSES TO SEE ME AND ORSON WELLES



IN THEATRES DECEMBER 11

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metronews.ca

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Hilton's humble adobe invaded

Nicky Hilton has been burgled, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The break-in at the blonde socialite's Hollywood home was reported at 3.30 p.m. Tuesday and a host of expensive items were stolen. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Nicolas Cage's ex suing his pants off

NO, ANYTHING BUT THE YACHTS! Nicolas Cage's financial and legal nightmare continues to grow, people.com reports.

Christina Fulton, mother of Cage's eldest child Weston, 18, is suing the actor for fraud and breach of contract, alleging she's been caught in the web of his financial mismanagement and is now more than $1.2 million US in debt herself, Los Angeles court papers show.

Cage stated in an October lawsuit he faces financial ruin after allegedly being duped by a former accountant, Samuel Levin. The actor currently owes $6.3 million in back taxes, recently defaulted on a $2 million loan, and has begun a massive sell-off of homes, cars, yachts and other possessions to recoup his losses.

Fulton, 42, a former actress, says she was provided an L.A. home years ago by Cage in exchange for raising Weston, and believed the property was under her name. That is until September, when Cage allegedly served her with a 60-day notice to get out.

Fulton says that because of Cage and Levin's negligence, she now owes the IRS more than $1 million, in addition to $250,000 in unpaid credit card debt. She says the credit card was supposed to be paid off regularly by Cage and that fraudulent charges were racked up by a staffer hired by the actor who didn't undergo a sufficient background check.

All told, Fulton says damages to her exceed $13 million.

Levin, the accountant, has countersued Cage, stating the actor's financial collapse was due to his "compulsive, self-destructive spending."

METRO WORLD NEWS





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Madonna's three kids dance it out on stage

MADGE'S OWN DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION It looks like that it won't just be Madonna's daughter Lourdes featuring in her work — four-year-old son David has revealed a love of the superstar's work, people.com reports.

"He knows every song, every word, every step, and he wants to wear all the costumes," Madonna, 51, told the British morning show GMTV.

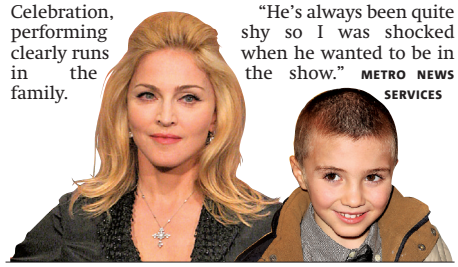
Coming after stage-ready Lourdes, 13, joined her mom in the video for Celebration, performing clearly runs in the family.

During her recent Sticky & Sweet world tour, Madonna's nine-year-old son with director Guy Ritchie, Rocco joined her on stage.

"When he jumped on stage to dance in my last show, I was shocked actually," she said.

"And secretly, unbeknownst to me, they're all studying privately with my dancers. And Rocco comes out and busts out like a moonwalk or you know, some kind of break-dancing move.

"He's always been quite shy so I was shocked when he wanted to be in the show." METRO NEWS SERVICES



Tequila shoots to the altar

SALT. TEQUILA. LIME. I DO. Tila Tequila is getting married to Johnson & Johnson heiress Casey Johnson — or so she said Wednesday morning in a rambling USTREAM video, usmagazine.com reports.

"We have an announcement," the 27-year-old MTV reality star began. "...So are you ready for this big announcement that's going to change our lives?

"I love you guys so much, we are giving you the exclusive first — Tila army fans — tonight, my girlfriend has asked me to marry her!"

She then flashed a "17-carat diamond ring from my baby."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Celebrity tweets

Paris Hilton comes out strongly against burglary, Stan Lee laments his inability to ask for money, Tom Arnold breaks the rules, and John Cleese got through eye surgery despite the pressure from his fans.

- @parishilton I HATE people who steal! It's so wrong! I hope they catch whoever did this! There has been so many robberies lately. So scary!
- @smilinstanlee Here's proof I'm a lousy businessman: Other guys become movie stars and get rich. I become a cameo star-- and get thank you's.
- @TomArnold In Shanghai doing @Asia_Uncut - nice people but Twitter banned here, oops
- @JohnCleese All well, the deed was done, and I can now see again... just... thank you all for your prayers and death threats (you know who you are).

METRO WORLD NEWS



Barton is okay with kissing girls

GIRLS ARE EASY Mischa Barton finds it peculiar that she's often asked to lock lips with another girl on-screen — she's done it three times in her young career — but she doesn't think it's a bad thing, according to Hollyscoop. "I don't know why that keeps coming up," says Barton. "It doesn't annoy me that much. It's so much easier to kiss another girl. You're so much more relaxed filming and you can have a laugh. It can get a bit tense with a guy." METRO WORLD NEWS



Rihanna's secret silver screen wish

KISSES DON'T LIE Rihanna wouldn't mind giving acting a try. And she has just the role for herself. "I'd love to be an assassin. Either that or a lesbian. Maybe both! Hey, a gay assassin, there's nothing hotter than that," she tells the Daily Star. When asked who she'd like to play her onscreen girlfriend, the singer insists, "Megan Fox – hands down. She's yummy."

METRO WORLD NEWS



Fergie thinks about having children

A FERGALICIOUS FAMILY Possibly hoping to put their recent alleged cheating scandal behind them, Fergie says she and Josh Duhammel are ready to start a family.

"Am I getting broody? Oh, definitely," she tells British Cosmopolitan. "I want to finish this tour first before trying to start a family."

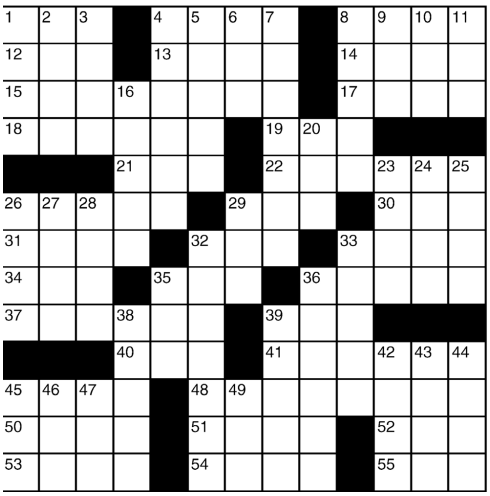
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TWN incorporates MSC data
Today Showers 40% 7° / -4°
Friday Variable 0° / -8°
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Take Five



1 Recipe meas.
4 Circulate
8 Wield an axe
12 Blackbird
13 Staffer
14 Posterior
15 Chickening-out feeling
17 Aware of
18 Rectangular
19 Spread seeds
21 Chart format
22 Exces-sively
26 Old anesthetic
29 Conk out
30 Born
31 Curds' mate
32 Parcel of land
33 Pack cargo
34 Historic time
35 Jewel
36 Saturn has many
37 Legislation
39 Old French coin
40 Coffee vessel
41 Capital of Oman
45 Creche trio
48 Ready to rumble
50 Not "fer"
51 Parliamentarian, perhaps
52 Lawyers' org.
53 Safecracker
54 Albanian coins
55 Bygone space station

DOWN

1 Mexican entree
2 Uppity one
3 Dosage, maybe
4 Dragon of Norse myth
5 Loyal subject
6 Rhyming tribute
7 Diver's garb
8 Mob
9 Coop denizen
10 Feedbag morsel
11 In favor of
16 Sleepy companion?
20 Inseparable
23 "Do — others ..."
24 Trotsky or Russell
25 Evergreens
26 Basin accessory
27 From one end to t'other
28 Get better
29 Comic DeLuise
32 Humorous hoax
33 March King
35 Wildebeest
36 Almond Joys minus almonds
38 Cake enhancement
39 Smug smile
42 Study all night
43 Both (Pref.)
44 Autocrat
45 Spring part
46 Time of your life?
47 Showbiz job
49 "Ulalume" writer

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	8						5	
4				8				2
5			9		1			7
		3	6		8	4		
				4				
		2	3		7	1		
6			4		2			1
2				1				9
	7						8	

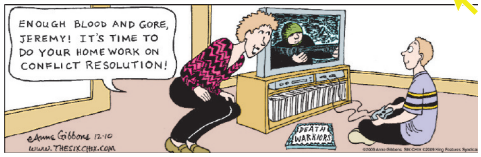
PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:



6	7	4	8	2	3	9	5	1
9	1	8	5	6	7	4	3	2
5	2	3	4	9	1	8	6	7
8	6	2	7	4	5	3	1	9
3	9	7	2	1	8	6	4	5
1	4	5	9	3	6	2	7	8
7	3	9	6	5	2	1	8	4
4	5	1	3	8	9	7	2	6
2	8	6	1	7	4	5	9	3

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca



Metro Recipe of the Day



Quick Garlic Pasta Sauce

Submitted by:
Debra Nasuti,
Winnipeg, MB

INGREDIENTS:

1 Cup olive oil
1/4 Cup water
3 Tablespoon paprika
6 Clove garlic chopped fine (more if desired)
1/2 Teaspoon salt (adjust to your taste)
2 Teaspoon parsley chopped
1/2 Cup grated parmesan cheese
1/2 chili pepper chopped fine (optional)

METHOD:

1. Heat oil and water over low heat. Add garlic and fry gently you do not want to burn the garlic. Add paprika, salt, and chili peppers (if you choose) and fry for 5 minutes. Keep stirring another 5 minutes. Paprika will thicken to a sauce like texture. Turn heat up slowly over the 5 minutes and watch that it does not burn.

2. Pour over pasta of your choice. Add the cheese and parsley and toss.

SERVES 4
PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOK TIME: 10 MINUTES

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Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Your confidence may be lower than usual but bear in mind that what seems low to you still seems high to most other people.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
There are some suspicious things going on at the moment and you can't help but wonder if someone is plotting against you. Don't overreact.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Like it or not you will have to admit that someone you thought you could trust has been taking advantage of your generous nature.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
In the greater scheme of things coincidences are rare, so be on your guard if a dangerous pattern seems to be repeating itself.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
Hard luck stories will be two-a-penny today, but not one of them is true. A little suspicion is no bad thing.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
It's good to speak your mind, of course, but if you are wise you won't say anything too outrageous today.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Come and go as you please today and ignore those who say you should stay where you are and see to your responsibilities.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
The only real danger today is that you might be a bit too forgiving for your own good. It might send the wrong signal.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
Don't worry too much if a loved one is difficult to get along with today because there is absolutely nothing wrong with your relationship.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
If you are finding it hard to reach an agreement with someone about a business-related issue you are advised to leave it a day or two.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
By all means use your imagination and find ways to boost your wealth and wellbeing, but avoid wishful thinking.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
You may be reluctant to cross swords with a rival today but the planets warn if you back down you can be bullied every day of the week.

Today in history

1898 – Spanish-American War: The Treaty of Paris is signed, officially ending the conflict.
1901 – The first Nobel Prizes are awarded.
1968 – Japan's biggest heist, the still-unsolved 300 million yen robbery, is carried out in Tokyo.
1996 – Rwandan Genocide: Military advisor to the United Nations Secretary-General and head of the Military Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Maurice Baril recommends that the UN multi-national forces in Zaire stand down.

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GL Sport model shown

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• 60/40 split fold-down rear seat • Rear adjustable head restraints



Limited model shown

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